

Weather Forecast

HYDERABAD

t° H 36° C L 27° C

VIJAYAWADA

t° H 37° C L 28° C

TIRUPATHI

t° H 37° C L 27° C



"Are Nukes Safe With Pak?"

- Rajnath Singh questions Pakistan's nuclear safety
- Urges IAEA supervision of Pakistan's nuclear weapons
- Defends Operation Sindoor as India's strong anti-terror stance

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday raised serious concerns over Pakistan's nuclear capability management, calling for global supervision of its nuclear arsenal. Speaking from Srinagar just days after India's Operation Sindoor, Singh urged the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to intervene and supervise Pakistan's nuclear weapons, citing the country's "irresponsible" behavior. "From the land of Srinagar, I want to raise this question – are nuclear weapons safe in the hands of such an irresponsible and rogue nation?" Singh asked, criticizing Pakistan's past threats and nuclear blackmail. His comments followed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent assertion that India would no longer tolerate nuclear threats from across the border. Singh remarked, "The world knows our army's aim is accurate, and when they hit, they leave the counting to the enemies. How strong India's resolve against terrorism is can be seen

CM Approves ₹33,720 Crore Investments in SIPB Meet

19 projects cleared across energy, tourism, IT, and textile sectors
34,621 new jobs expected from fresh investments

TPN Correspondent | Amaravati

Andhra Pradesh has taken yet another stride toward industrial progress, with the 6th State Investment Promotion Board (SIPB) meeting chaired by Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu approving 19 major investment proposals worth ₹33,720 crore. These projects are expected to create employment opportunities for 34,621 people, reflecting renewed investor confidence under the coalition government. Held at the Secretariat, the SIPB meeting marked a significant milestone in the state's growth push, with domestic and international companies showing increasing interest in establishing ventures. These investments span key sectors such as energy, tourism, IT, electronics, and textiles. CM Naidu emphasized the need for continuous monitoring of all approved projects, instructing officials to track the implementation from the ground-breaking to operational stage. He proposed the creation of a real-time dashboard displaying the status of every project and the associated job creation. "A portal must display investment and job details. Progress updates must be regular. SIPB reviews should also report on earlier approvals," the Chief Minister directed.



Tourism Sector Push

Naidu also announced a bold vision for the tourism sector — aiming to add 50,000 hotel rooms across the state. He highlighted the shortage of quality accommodations, especially near temple hubs, and called for tent-based lodging projects and caravan policies to enrich tourist experiences. He added that affordable hotels would boost local tourism, particularly at spiritual locations along Krishna and Godavari rivers. "Affordable, clean lodging is vital for family visitors. More rooms mean more tourism revenue," the CM stated.

Circular Economy from Agri-Waste

Addressing environmental and industrial integration, Naidu urged officials to encourage industries using agricultural waste, promoting a circular economy by setting up small-scale processing plants. "Burning agricultural waste must be stopped. Instead, we should use it as raw material to create sustainable industries," he noted.

Highlights of the 6th SIPB Meeting Approvals

Total Investment:
₹33,720 crore
Total Projects: 19
Expected Jobs: 34,621

Key Approvals:

Energy Sector: ₹15,961 crore across 4 projects (Amplus, Deshraj, Bondada, Nitin Sai)
Tourism: ₹1,376 crore in 3 projects (Tirupati, Vizag)
IT & Electronics: ₹3,532 crore in 2 projects (Daikin, Sensorem Photonics)
Textile: ₹2,489 crore in 3 projects (Rambhadra, Mohan Spintex, ATC Tyres)
APIIC Projects: Wingtech and Alip Kuppam totaling ₹1,066 crore
Other Manufacturing: ₹9,296 crore from companies like Blue Jet, Bharat Electronics, and Deccan Fine Chemicals

With this latest round of approvals, the total investment cleared across six SIPB meetings over the past 11 months has reached ₹4,95,796 crore through 76 projects, promising employment to 4,50,934 individuals. The Andhra Pradesh government's policy reboot and proactive investor engagement appear to be paying off as the state re-establishes itself as a top destination for industrial development.

"Red Book" Tracks those who Troubled Party Workers

TPN Correspondent | Anantapur

Telugu Desam Party (TDP) national general secretary and Andhra Pradesh Minister Nara Lokesh has issued a stern warning that those who harassed party workers during the previous YSRCP government will not be spared. Speaking at a TDP workers' meeting held at Ramarajupalli near Guntakal, Lokesh said, "I will not quarrel with anyone unnecessarily, but if they come in my way, I will not tolerate it." He revealed that party cadres continue to raise the issue of the "Red Book", which allegedly contains names and details of those who targeted TDP supporters during the opposition period. Lokesh assured that necessary action will be taken at the right time. Referring to the liquor policy scam during the previous regime, he said that while everyone in the state is aware of the corrup-



tion, action will follow in due course. State Finance Minister Payyavula Keshav, Anantapur MP Ambika Lakshminarayana, Guntakal MLA Gummanur Jayaram, and other senior leaders participated in the meeting. Lokesh praised the TDP's record-breaking membership drive, claiming one crore members had enrolled, making it a national record. He lauded the commitment of grassroots workers in the

Guntakal constituency, who succeeded in the elections despite a late announcement of the candidate. Lokesh stressed the need for coordination between senior and new leaders in the party and said that only those who work hard will be prioritized. Urging party cadres to avoid internal factionalism, Lokesh advised, "You should all be one group—Telugu Desam.

Let's Work Together to Strengthen the Ration System

Minister Nadendla chairs key review with ration dealers

TPN Correspondent | Vijayawada

Andhra Pradesh Civil Supplies Minister Nadendla Manohar emphasized the importance of collaborative efforts in strengthening the Public Distribution System (PDS) to ensure welfare benefits reach every eligible household in the state. Addressing a crucial review meeting today at the Civil Supplies Bhavan in Kannur, Vijayawada, the Minister interacted with representatives of the Cheap Shops Association and Mobile Dispensing Unit (MDU) operators. Expressing concern over delays in ration distribution, especially in rural and remote areas, Minister Nadendla stated, "In many villages and towns, poor people are still waiting for the rice provided by the government. It is our duty to ensure essential goods reach all eligible beneficiaries



without disruption." He explained that the government is purchasing rice at ₹46.10 per kg and distributing it to the poor, showcasing its commitment to welfare. Currently, around 2.5 lakh metric tons of rice and 6,500 metric tons of sugar are being distributed every month through approximately 29,000 fair price shops across Andhra Pradesh. The Minister reaffirmed the coalition government's commitment to running the PDS

in a more transparent and efficient manner. "We are working with the goal of delivering every welfare benefit to each household. With everyone's cooperation, we will address the challenges in the system and improve service delivery," he said. During the meeting, Civil Supplies Commissioner Saurabh Gaur and Managing Director Manveer Jilani joined the discussions, listening to field-level issues raised by ration shop dealers and MDU operators from various districts. The representatives shared concerns over logistical challenges and system inefficiencies, which the Minister assured would be addressed with prompt and practical solutions. Minister Nadendla concluded the session with a call for unity and partnership among all stakeholders to make the ration system more robust and people-centric.



Center's Big Push for Clean Land Records

- ₹3,000 Cr survey plan launched using tech
- Aadhaar–land record linkage made mandatory
- Union Minister Pemmasani unveils plan in Guntur



TPN Correspondent | Andhra Pradesh

Union Minister of State for Rural Development and Communications, Dr. Chandrashekhara Pemmasani, announced a massive new initiative to modernize land records and end long-standing disputes across the country. Speaking at a national workshop in Guntur, he said a technolo-

gy-driven land survey and resurvey will be conducted as part of the Digital India Land Records Modernization Program (DILRMP). This comprehensive resurvey—set to cover 3 lakh square kilometers of rural agricultural land—will be implemented in five phases, with the first phase costing ₹3,000 crore and to be completed within two years. Cutting-edge technologies like

drones, aircraft, AI, GIS, and high-precision instruments will replace outdated methods, making the process 90% cheaper than traditional surveys. Minister Pemmasani stressed that cooperation from the states is essential. While the Centre will provide funding and technical support, states must handle field verification and on-ground execution. He also emphasized mandatory Aadhaar linkage with Record of Rights (RoRs), which would facilitate direct delivery of benefits such as PM-KISAN, crop insurance, and Agri stock access. He asserted that accurate records will help boost rural credit, reduce fraud, and increase economic confidence for both farmers and investors. He said, “If we want smart cities, safe homes, and sustainable agriculture, we must start from the ground.” However, the minister pointed out that only 4% of villages have completed the resurvey work so far, and many states have not updated cadastral maps or taken up map-based subdivisions, making most territorial data obsolete. Highlighting the need for political will and better coordination, Pemmasani concluded that without serious efforts, surveys risk being left incomplete. Senior officials and experts from across India participated in the Guntur workshop, discussing how to move forward with unified and transparent land management.

"Are Nukes Safe With Pak?"

Continued from page 1

by our response — we did not even care about their nuclear blackmail.” During his visit to the Army’s 15 Corps Headquarters in Srinagar, Rajnath Singh reviewed the overall security situation and examined the combat readiness of the Indian Armed Forces. He also inspected Pakistani artillery shells used in recent attacks along the border and interacted with soldiers on the ground. The Defence Minister was accompanied by Jammu & Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha. This marked Singh’s first visit to the Valley after India’s execution of Operation Sindoor — a targeted military strike in Pakistan and Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir (PoK) in retaliation to the April 22 terror attack in Pahalgam that claimed the lives of Indian soldiers and civilians. Paying tribute to the martyred personnel, Singh said, “I bow to the supreme sacrifice of our brave jawans. I also pay respect to the innocent civilians who were killed and salute the valour of our injured soldiers.” Calling Operation Sindoor a “big commitment,” the Defence Minister emphasized, “We will go to any extent to end terrorism. Pakistan has to stop sheltering terrorists.” His strong remarks signal India’s firm posture not only against terrorism but also in questioning Pakistan’s nuclear accountability on an international platform.

Minister Gottipati Reviews Power Sector Progress with CMDs

TPN Correspondent | Amaravati

Energy Minister Gottipati Ravi Kumar on Thursday held a key review meeting with the Chairmen and Managing Directors (CMDs) of all three power distribution companies (DISCOMs) at the State Secretariat to assess the status of various ongoing power sector initiatives. The review mainly focused on agricultural power connections, power cuts, PM Suryagarh, and RDSS-related works. The minister emphasized that every eligible farmer who applies for a power connection must be given one before the onset of the agricultural season. “DISCOMs must be fully prepared to meet any increase in demand from the farming sector,” he said. During the meeting, Minister Gottipati enquired about the frequency and reasons for ongoing power cuts in the state. He made it clear that under no circumstances should there be unannounced power interruptions. “Power supply must be uninterrupted, and in the case of emergency disruptions, the local people must be informed in advance,” he instructed. The minister also reviewed the status of pending works in the power department and directed officials to expedite their com-



pletion. He said delays would not be tolerated and that timely execution is essential to maintain public confidence in the department. The meeting also saw detailed discussions on the progress of PM Suryagarh and the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS). Minister Gottipati urged officials to speed up RDSS implementation and ensure that renewable energy awareness is taken to the grassroots level. “The success of PM Suryagarh depends on strong public participation. Awareness campaigns must be intensified,” he said. Pullareddy, the newly appointed CMD of the Central Region Power Distribution Company, was present in person, while the other two CMDs participated virtually.

Monsoon To Arrive Early In AP This Year

TPN Correspondent | Amaravati

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has predicted an early onset of the southwest monsoon in Andhra Pradesh this year. Usually arriving by June 4, the monsoon is now expected to enter the state 4 to 5 days earlier, around June 1, according to the latest forecasts. IMD Amaravati scientist Dr. Sagili Karunasagar explained that the southwest monsoon is predicted to hit Kerala by May 27, which is the official indicator for the monsoon’s arrival in mainland India. However, he added there might be a delay of up to four days depending on weather systems like cyclonic circulations. The precise timing for Andhra Pradesh will be clarified in the long-term forecast scheduled for release on May 16. The IMD noted favorable conditions for the monsoon’s progress over the South Arabian Sea, Maldives, Kanyakumari, and parts of the Bay of Bengal. These areas are likely to support an early expansion of the monsoon. Last year, the monsoon reached Andhra Pradesh on June 2, two days ahead of the usual date, delivering 629.2 mm of rainfall—well above the state’s average of 521.6 mm. Meanwhile, the AP State Disaster Manage-



ment Authority (APSDMA) warned of mixed weather over the next two days. Some regions may experience light to moderate rains with thunder and lightning, while others could face high temperatures and

gusty winds, said APSDMA Managing Director Ronamki Kurmanath. Residents are advised to stay alert to weather updates as the monsoon season approaches early.

SC Rejects NTR Medical University Appeal

SC upholds ₹7 lakh compensation to NEET aspirant

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

NTR University of Health Sciences has suffered a legal setback in the Supreme Court, which refused to interfere with the Andhra Pradesh High Court’s order directing the university to pay ₹7 lakh as compensation to a student for wrongful denial of an MBBS seat during NEET Counseling 2022. The case pertains to Revoor Venkata Ashrita, a student from Nellore, who had applied for MBBS admission under the NCC Open Women’s Category. Despite scoring higher marks in both NEET and the NCC quota, she was denied admission, while another candidate with lower scores was allotted a seat in Narayana Medical College, Nellore. After approaching the High Court, Justice K. Manmadha Rao had ruled on February 20, 2024, that the university’s actions were illegal and unjustified, resulting in Ashrita losing the opportunity to pursue MBBS and being compelled to take up a dental course instead. The court awarded her ₹7 lakh in compensation for the career setback and emotional distress. In response, NTR Medical University challenged this verdict in the Supreme Court on March 6. However, a two-judge bench comprising Justices MM Sundaresh and Rajesh Bindal on Thursday dismissed the appeal, stating they saw no valid reason to interfere with the High Court’s judgment. At the same time, the Supreme Court made an important clarification that the current ruling should not set a precedent for future compensation claims in similar cases. The bench emphasized that no other candidates will be entitled to seek such compensation based on this verdict, thereby limiting its applicability to the specific facts of Ashrita’s case.



“VR High School To Get Corporate-Style Makeover”

TPN Correspondent | Nellore

Municipal Administration Minister Dr. Ponguru Narayana announced that VR High School in Nellore is being transformed into one of the finest government-run schools in the state, with corporate-style amenities for students from poor families. On Thursday morning, the minister inspected the ongoing modernization works and directed officials to speed up construction activities. Minister Narayana suggested that a playground be developed in place of the demolished old structures and instructed the construction of a strong capstone wall for safety. Speaking to reporters, he said the government is fulfilling its promise to provide quality education to underprivileged children in the city. “During the elections, I visited 84,000 of the 94,000 houses in Nellore and saw firsthand the condition of poor children. I promised a corporate-level school for them, and that commitment is now becoming a reality,” the minister said. He stated that the upgraded VR High School would admit 1,000 poor children each year, reaching a total of 5,000 students within five years. Admission will be restricted to children below the poverty line. Students from Classes 6 to 10 residing near the school will be provided with bicycles, while others will be offered free transportation. Additionally, nutritious food will be served thrice daily—breakfast, lunch, and evening snacks. Dr. Narayana stressed that all the development works will be completed by the end of May, and the revamped school will officially be launched on June 12. He expressed confidence that the school will emerge as a model for the entire state in providing high-quality education to the economically disadvantaged. Joint Collector Karthik, Municipal Commissioner Nandan, local public representatives, activists, and NCC and Corporation Engineering Department officials joined the minister during the inspection.

“Red Book” Tracks...

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Leave arrogance and work among the people to resolve their issues.” He encouraged workers to abide by leadership decisions and said internal issues should be addressed within the party while projecting unity externally with chants of “Jai Telugu Desam.” Lokesh also announced the launch of a new app, My TDP, to be released after the Mahanadu. The app will keep cadres informed and ensure smoother communication at all organizational levels. He also confirmed that mini Mahanadus will take place at constituency levels on May 18, 19, and 20, followed by the state-level Mahanadu in Kadapa on May 27, 28, and 29. He called on all party workers to actively participate in these key events.

Kadapa Mahanadu Will Be Historic: CM

- Mahanadu in Kadapa brings new enthusiasm to Rayalaseema
- Ending factionalism and ushering irrigation, industry
- CM calls for detailed discussion on welfare, and party vision

TPN Correspondent | Amaravati

Chief Minister and TDP national president Nara Chandrababu Naidu has declared that the Mahanadu to be held in Kadapa for the first time will go down in history. Addressing a preparatory meeting with key leaders and organizing committee members at the TDP central office on Wednesday, he described the upcoming Mahanadu—scheduled for May 27, 28, and 29—as a symbol of a new era in Rayalaseema’s political and developmental landscape.

Chandrababu emphasized that this Mahanadu is the first to be held after the alliance government assumed power in 2024, marking a significant political milestone. While the event was previously held in places like Tirupati, its debut in Kadapa signifies renewed momentum in the region, which has long been central to the TDP’s development narrative.

He pointed out that the Telugu Desam Party has played a pivotal role in transforming Rayalaseema, both socially and economically. “We have given irrigation water, ended the faction culture, brought industries, and promoted horticulture. Rayalaseema is no longer drought-prone—this is the result of consistent efforts under TDP rule,” Chandrababu said.

He cited major irrigation projects initiated during TDP’s tenure—Han-dree-Niva, Galeru-Nagari, Telugu Ganga, Muchumarri Lift—as game



changers that turned once-barren lands into cultivable regions. He highlighted how over ₹12,000 crore was spent post-2014 on irrigation alone in Rayalaseema, including promoting drip irrigation, especially in Anantapur, once on the brink of desertification.

Beyond agriculture, Chandrababu stressed the industrial push in Rayalaseema with key hubs such as Kopparthi (Kadapa), Orvakal (Kurnool), BPCL in Ramayapatnam, and Kia Motors and renewable energy in Anantapur. He credited TDP for developing Tirupati and Tirumala, and for building Kadapa and Kur-

nool airports.

Regarding the upcoming Mahanadu, he said it will infuse fresh enthusiasm in Rayalaseema and reflect the people’s confidence in TDP’s four-decade-long vision and service. He encouraged leaders to ensure smooth arrangements for all delegates, including transport and accommodation.

He outlined the agenda for the three-day Mahanadu, stating that the first day will be dedicated to internal party discussions, the second day will focus on a comprehensive review of the government’s performance, including welfare schemes

and development programs, and the third day will culminate in a massive public gathering expected to attract lakhs of participants.

Chandrababu urged party leaders to organize mini Mahanadus in constituencies on May 18–20 and in parliamentary segments on May 22–23, to engage cadres and prepare ground-level leaders for the main event. He concluded by stating that the Mahanadu should reinforce the coalition government’s welfare achievements, encourage resolution-driven discussions, and present a vision for the future of Andhra Pradesh, especially Rayalaseema.

Maidukuru Chairman Chandra Quits YSRCP

May join Jana Sena or TDP soon

TPN Correspondent | Kadapa

In another setback to the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP), Maidukuru Municipal Chairman Chandra has officially resigned from the party. Chandra, who had been inactive in party affairs for some time, made a public announcement on Wednesday declaring his decision to leave YSRCP.

Explaining the reasons for his resignation, Chandra revealed that he had been trying to meet party president and former CM Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy through the former MLA of the constituency for the last three months, but his efforts were ignored. Expressing his disappointment, he said he would now consult with his supporters before making any decision about his political future.

Speculation is already rife that Chandra might join either the Jana Sena Party or the Telugu Desam Party (TDP), both of which are actively trying to strengthen their base in Kadapa district.

Chandra’s resignation adds to the ongoing exodus from the YSRCP, particularly notable as he hails from Jagan’s home district. Just a day earlier, Zakia Khanam, a senior party leader and deputy chairperson of the Legislative Council, resigned from both her position and party membership. Within hours, she joined the BJP (Kamalam Party), becoming the sixth MLC to leave YSRCP in recent times.

These back-to-back resignations indicate growing unrest within the party ranks as it faces increasing political pressure in Andhra Pradesh.

No Relief for Sajjala Bhargav

SC directs him to approach trial court in SC/ST case



TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

YSR Congress Party leader Sajjala Bhargav Reddy faced a setback in the Supreme Court as it refused to grant any immediate relief in the SC and ST Atrocities (Prevention of Atrocities) Act case registered against him. The apex court did not issue any interim bail and advised the leader to approach the trial court for redressal.

A bench comprising Justice Pankaj Mittal and Justice SVN Bhatt heard the matter on Thursday. Bhargav Reddy had filed a petition seeking interim bail in the case, but his counsel informed the court that senior advocates representing him were unavailable. Respecting this request, the bench postponed the hearing to next week to allow time for arguments by the senior lawyer.

However, the bench also made it clear that since the case pertains to the SC and ST Act, Bhargav Reddy should consider seeking appropriate legal remedy before the trial court. This development comes after the Andhra Pradesh High Court dismissed Bhargav Reddy’s petition earlier. He had moved the High Court to quash the FIR and prevent arrest in connection with the case, but the court declined to intervene. Subsequently, he challenged the High Court’s order in the Supreme Court.

As things stand, Bhargav Reddy remains without legal relief and must wait for next week’s hearing or explore trial court options, as advised by the apex bench.



YCP alleges misuse of GHMC Act to target Kadapa Mayor

TPN Correspondent | Kadapa

Kadapa District YSRCP President P. Ravindranath Reddy came down heavily on the state coalition government, accusing it of running a “Red Book Constitution” and targeting political opponents through unlawful disqualifications. His remarks came in response to the disqualification of Kadapa Mayor Suresh Babu, which has stirred controversy and political tensions in the region.

Speaking at a press conference at the YSRCP office on Wednesday, Ravindranath Reddy lashed out at what he called “demonic governance” in Andhra Pradesh. “There is no trace of development in the coalition rule. They are only focused on factionalism and vendettas,” he said, slamming the government for acting arbitrarily against Mayor Suresh Babu by applying the GHMC Act — a statute not applicable in Kadapa. He alleged that the municipal corporation has no specific Act and that the government is selectively using provisions of the GHMC Act to settle political scores. “This is not about governance; this is about chairs. Even their own media has written it’s about the fight for chairs,” he remarked.

Reddy questioned the fairness of the disqualification, saying, “How is it factionalism when a chair was not given to the MLA during a general body meeting? Protocol clearly states only the Mayor must sit on the stage.

Land Grabbing Case Against Peddireddy and Family

- 27.98 acres of forest land encroached
- Biodiversity loss pegged at over ₹1 crore

TPN Correspondent | Chittoor

In a significant development, the Forest Department has registered a land encroachment case against senior YSRCP leader and Punganur MLA Peddireddy Ramachandra Reddy and his family members. The case, registered on the 6th of this month, pertains to the illegal occupation of approximately 27.98 acres of forest land in Mangalam-pet, located in Pulicherla mandal of Chittoor district. Alongside the former minister, others named in the case include his son and Rajampet MP Peddireddy Mithun Reddy, his brother and Tamballapalle MLA Peddireddy Dwarakanath Reddy, and his brother’s wife Indiramma. Forest officials, in their report, alleged that the accused had not only entered and occupied protected forest land in violation of regulations but also inflicted substantial environmental damage.

The issue came under official scrutiny after a leading newspaper published a detailed report titled “Illegal Empire in the Forest” on January 29. In response, the state government appointed a special committee comprising District Collector Sumit Kumar, Superintendent of Police Manikanta, and Forest Conservator Yashodabai to investigate the matter. Following their field visit, the committee confirmed the illegal encroachment of 27.98 acres and reported that a borewell was also dug without any official authorization. Officials have estimated that the unlawful activities have caused biodiversity loss amounting to over ₹1 crore. At present, the forest department is in the process of installing boundary stones to demarcate the encroached land. This work is expected to be completed within a week, after which a chargesheet will be filed in the Pakala court.



Meanwhile, Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan has reportedly taken serious note of the incident and instructed officials to register criminal cases against all those involved. Following his directives, discussions are underway to initiate further legal action. Sources also reveal that an internal probe has been launched to identify any government officials who may have supported or turned a blind eye to the encroachment, and departmental action against them is likely.

Chandrababu’s Decisions Betray NTR’s Ideals: Tulasi Reddy

TPN Correspondent | Kadapa

Congress senior leader Dr. Tulasi Reddy has strongly criticized the Andhra Pradesh coalition government for allegedly neglecting the Rs 500 crore government medical college built in Pulivendula municipality, Kadapa district. He accused Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu of betraying the vision of TDP founder N.T. Rama Rao by allowing such vital public institutions to go to waste. On Wednesday, Tulasi Reddy, along with Pulivendula constituency in-charge Dhruva Kumar Reddy and other Congress leaders, inspected the Dr. YSR Medical College campus, including its main buildings, hospital, and nursing college. Addressing reporters after



the visit, he said the previous YSRCP government had established the medical college on 53 acres to provide quality healthcare and affordable education to rural and poor students. “NT Rama Rao established the Telugu Desam Party to uplift the Telugu people and ensure that education is accessible to the poor without donations,” Tulasi Reddy stated. “But Chandrababu Naidu is

moving in the opposite direction by encouraging the privatization of medical education. This will deprive talented students from weaker sections of access to medical education.”

He alleged that the current administration is stalling the functioning of the Pulivendula medical college to pave the way for private interests. “The government must act swiftly to operationalize this college. Otherwise, a state-wide agitation will be launched under the leadership of the Congress High Command,” he warned. Dhruva Kumar Reddy echoed similar concerns, stating that Chandrababu Naidu had promised to treat all regions equally, including Pulivendula, during his election campaign.

MP Kesineni Pushes for NAC in Amaravati

TPN Correspondent | Vijayawada
Vijayawada MP Kesineni Shivanath (Chinni) emphasized the urgent need for skilled construction workers and trained personnel to ensure quality structures in the rapidly growing construction sector. On Thursday, MP Kesineni along with ABAOCWAC Chairman Gottumukkala Raghurama Raju and AP NAAC officials visited the National Academy of Construction (NAC) facility in Madhapur, Hyderabad, to review its training programs and performance. Welcoming the delegation, Telangana NAAC Training Director Shantisree introduced the skill development initiatives for engineering students, unemployed youth, and construction workers offered at the center.



MP Kesineni highlighted Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu's vision to establish a National Academy of Construction in Amaravati, which is set to be implemented soon. He pointed out that the ambitious Amaravati capital

construction project, costing around ₹60,000 crore, requires a large workforce including civil engineers, skilled workers, electricians, and plumbers. Training workers through NAAC will ensure the creation of a world-class capital city. He further explained that many youths with less than certificate-level or intermediate education face limited job opportunities due to financial or family constraints. The planned NAC in Amaravati aims to empower these individuals by providing industry-relevant training and skill development. Kesineni urged Telangana NAAC officials to extend their support until the Andhra Pradesh institute is fully operational. MP Kesineni also praised NAC's pi-

oneering role since its inception in 1998 under the leadership of former CM Nara Chandrababu Naidu. He noted that NAC-trained youth now find employment across India and abroad, and the institution's reputation as the leading construction training academy in the country is a source of pride for both Telugu states. The visit included Telangana NAC officials such as CTTI M. Rajireddy, Deputy Director N. Raju, Training Assistant Director M.D. Anwar bin Mohammed, and AP NAC Regional Director P. Muralidhar. This initiative is expected to not only provide skilled manpower for Amaravati's development but also generate widespread employment opportunities in the construction sector.

Rare Silk Saree Gifted to Kanakadurgamma

Siricilla weaver presents a matchbox-sized saree to

TPN Correspondent | Vijayawada

In a remarkable offering, a rare silk saree that fits inside a matchbox was presented to Goddess Kanakadurgamma at the Indrakiladri temple in Vijayawada. The unique gift was offered by handloom worker Nalla Vijayakumar from Siricilla, Telangana, showcasing the intricate craftsmanship of traditional weavers. As part of the offering, the tiny silk saree was first placed in front of the deity and worshipped with special rituals. The temple priests performed pujas before handing the saree over to the temple's Executive Officer (EO), Sri Nanayak. The temple authorities appreciated the devotion and effort behind this unique offering. Vijayakumar's gesture highlights the cultural connection between traditional weaving communities and spiritual practices, earning admiration from both devotees and officials alike.



MLA Vasantha Begins Works for Budameru Retaining Wall

TPN Correspondent | NTR District

Mylavaram MLA Vasantha Venkata Krishnaprasad on Thursday formally launched the construction of a concrete retaining wall aimed at permanently preventing floods from the Budameru river in Vijayawada. The project, estimated at ₹28 crore, involves building a protection wall along the Budameru Diversion Channel (BDC) in Shantinagar, Kondapalli — a location that witnessed severe damage during last year's unseasonal rains. The BDC had suffered major landslides at three locations during the rains, leading to the flooding of several parts of Vijayawada. Emergency repair



works were taken up at that time to fill the gullies and prevent further damage. However, to avert such flood risks in the future, a permanent solution has now been initiated. Speaking after performing the Bhumi Puja and launching

the concrete work, MLA Krishna Prasad stated that the retaining wall would connect all three previously damaged points, and efforts are underway to complete the construction by June 10, ahead of the onset of the monsoon season. He emphasized that the NDA coalition government is committed to safeguarding the lives and properties of people in flood-prone regions. Leaders and representatives of the coalition, along with local officials and engineers, participated in the program. The construction of this retaining wall marks a critical step toward ensuring that the city of Vijayawada is not exposed to another round of flooding due to Budameru overflow in the future.

Govt Subsidised Cattle Feed

50% subsidy provided to support farmers

TPN Correspondent | Vijayawada

To address the ongoing shortage of animal feed during the summer season, Mylavaram MLA Sri Vasantha Venkata Krishna Prasad on Thursday distributed nutrient-rich feed bags at 50 percent subsidy to cattle breeders in Gollapudi, Vijayawada Rural Mandal. Speaking at the event, MLA Krishna Prasad explained that each eligible family would receive fodder for a maximum of two large cattle, totaling 450 kg for a 90-day period. A 50 kg feed bag, originally priced at ₹1,100, is now being made available to beneficiaries for just ₹555. He noted that this is the first time



fodder with 20 percent protein content is being provided to livestock farmers. The initiative is specifically aimed at small, marginal, and white ration card-holding farmers through the Animal Husbandry De-

partment. Highlighting the scale of the program, the MLA revealed that the department plans to distribute 31,067 tons of fodder across the state at a total estimated cost of ₹69 crore, directly benefiting 21 lakh cattle breeders. Despite the additional financial burden posed by the subsidy, the NDA government has decided to prioritize the well-being of farmers and ensure sustainable dairy production during the challenging summer months. MLA Krishna Prasad urged all eligible cattle breeders to make the most of this support initiative. Leaders of the NDA alliance and local officials were present at the distribution event.

Purandeswari Invites Pawan Kalyan to Join Tiranga Rally

TPN Correspondent | Vijayawada

BJP State President Daggubati Purandeswari has invited Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan to participate in the Tiranga rally scheduled to be held in Vijayawada on Friday. The rally is being organized as part of a nationwide BJP initiative to express solidarity with the Indian soldiers and the success of Operation Sindoor. The Tiranga rally in Vijayawada will commence from Indira Gandhi Municipal Stadium and proceed up to Benz Circle. It is part of the BJP's broader campaign across the country to honor the sacrifices and courage of Indian armed forces. Purandeswari personally called Pawan Kalyan and invited him to attend the rally. In response, Pawan Kalyan assured that Janasena Party will actively participate in the event. She also announced that Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu would be joining the rally, signaling a united front among the alliance partners. BJP leaders believe that the participation of top alliance figures like Chandrababu Naidu and Pawan Kalyan will add significant momentum to the Vijayawada rally and reflect strong support for national security initiatives.



Unity Is Key To Solving Employees' Issues

P. Ravi Prasad elected Chairman of APJAC Amaravati Capital Unit

TPN Correspondent | Vijayawada

Reinforcing its commitment to the welfare of government employees, the Andhra Pradesh Joint Action Committee (APJAC) Amaravati has reorganized its Capital Unit with a new leadership team. In a general body meeting held at the Revenue Bhavan in Vijayawada on May 15, 2025, P. Ravi Prasad from NTR Health University was unanimously elected as the Chairman of the APJAC Amaravati Capital Unit, with B. Vijaya Raghava named Associate Chairman. This move is seen as a significant step in consolidating employee unity, especially among those working in the Heads of Departments (HODs), which play a vital role in the state's administration. The newly constituted executive committee now comprises 19 members, including seven newly elected representatives. State Chairman of APJAC Amaravati, Bopparaju Venkateswarlu, who graced the occasion as chief guest, emphasized the importance of unity. "Only when all employees unite under one platform can we lay the foundation for solving their issues. The Capital Unit serves as the core of AP-



JAC Amaravati and must lead with strength and solidarity," he stated. Echoing similar sentiments, Secretary General Palisetty Damodar Rao stressed that employees working in the capital region must rally together to protect their interests and those of future generations. "This is not just an administrative reorganization but a rejuvenation of our collective spirit," he said. New Executive Committee Members – APJAC Amaravati Capital Unit:
• Chairman: P. Ravi Prasad
• Associate Chairman: B. Vijaya Raghava
• Treasurer: V. Raghu Kumar

- Organizing Secretary: R. Sai Krishtateja
 - Co-Chairman: B. Pullaiah
 - Vice Presidents: B. Sriramulu and M. Sambasiva Reddy
 - Committee Restructuring In-Charge: T. Chinna Reddy
- The reconstitution of the committee saw the formation of a strong 19-member team combining old and new members. The session was presided over by Capital Unit General Secretary Mdmaga Shankar Rao. Senior APJAC Amaravati leaders present at the event included Associate Chairman T.V. Phaniperraju, Organizing Secretary B. Kishore Kumar, State Women Committee Chairperson Pare Lakshmi, Secretary General Ponnuru Vijayalakshmi, Capital City Women Wing General Secretary C.H. Harshita, and Treasurer S.K. Moti. The event also witnessed active participation from a large number of HOD employees, underlining strong grassroots support. With this new team, APJAC Amaravati hopes to continue its proactive role in advocating for employee rights and resolving long-standing issues.

Rare Global Honour For Vijayawada Photographer

- Ch.V.S. Vijaya Bhaskara Rao gets Honorary FIP Award for 2025
- Only one photographer globally receives this title each year
- Rao has won 2,675 awards in a 44-year photography career



TPN Correspondent | Vijayawada
Veteran photojournalist Ch.V.S. Vijaya Bhaskara Rao from Vijayawada has received the rare and prestigious Honorary FIP (Federation of Indian Photography) award for 2025—an international distinction given to only one photographer in the world annually. Rao is only the third recipient from the Telugu-speaking States to receive this global honour. Speaking on the occasion, Rao said, “This award is not open for application. It is conferred upon individuals specially selected by the FIP for their distinguished service to photography at the national and international level.” He currently serves as the Presi-

dent of the Andhra Pradesh Photojournalists Association. With a career spanning over four decades, Rao has earned 2,675 awards across State, National, and International platforms. His honours include EFIAP (France), ARPS (London), PPSA (USA), and 18 other global distinctions. One of his standout photographs, Thirsty, was chosen by the Royal Photographic Society (London) during its 150th anniversary celebrations. He is also a two-time UNESCO awardee. Reflecting on his journey, Rao said, “I feel blessed to be in photography for the 44th year. It has been a wonderful journey, and I’m grateful to my mentors and fellow photographers who supported me. Capturing rural life and wildlife brings me the greatest satisfaction.” Rao also stands out academically, holding multiple degrees including MCJ, MA, BFA, and an Honorary Doctorate. He currently serves as guest faculty in the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication/Photography at Acharya Nagarjuna University. He expressed his heartfelt thanks to Dr. Barun Sinha, Honorary Secretary-General of FIP, and the entire committee for recognising his contributions to the world of photography.

MP Vemireddy Applauds MLA Kotamreddy’s Progress

339 development works inaugurated

₹231 crore spent in 11 months

MSME park foundation laid to boost local employment



TPN Correspondent | Nellore
Nellore Parliamentarian Vemireddy Prabhakar Reddy praised Nellore Rural MLA Kotamreddy Sridhar Reddy for turning the constituency into a key address for development. The occasion was the inauguration of 339 ambitious development works carried out with a total expenditure of ₹41 crore within just 60 days. The event also saw the presence of State Minister Ponguru Narayana, MLC Beeda Ravichandra, District Collector O. Anand, Nellore Municipal Corporation Mayor Potlur Sravanthi, and TDP leader Giridhar Reddy. MP Vemireddy, who had earlier participated in a massive rally, greeted the people and inaugurated a stone plaque installed at Kallurupalli Housing Board. Speaking to the media, he praised MLA Sridhar Reddy as the only legislator who has rapidly transformed the rural constituency.

He highlighted that the coalition government has invested ₹231 crore for constituency development in just 11 months—a remarkable achievement. He added that under the leadership of Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu, the state is progressing rapidly, with special focus on industrial growth. The recent laying of the foundation stone for a 60-acre MSME park in Amancharla, Nellore Rural, is expected to create thousands of local jobs, boosting the economy and providing opportunities to the youth. District Collector O. Anand, who spoke on the occasion, raised a point regarding land for staff accommodation at the MP Vemireddy ESI Hospital. While land is available for the hospital's construction, space is lacking for staff quarters. The Collector requested an inspection of the available land, promising to address the issue promptly.

Death Sentence After 22 Years

Woman’s 2003 murder case ends with capital punishment

TPN Correspondent | Palnadu
In a major development, the Narasaraopet Additional District Sessions Court has sentenced a man to death in connection with the brutal murder of a woman that occurred over two decades ago. Justice Nethi Sathyasree delivered the verdict against Tanniru Ankamarao, who was found guilty of murdering a woman on May 6, 2003, in Narasaraopet town. The incident, which shocked the region at the time, remained under judicial scrutiny for years. Following a detailed investigation, police had filed a charge sheet identifying Ankamarao as the prime accused. After

years of court proceedings and the examination of evidence, the court concluded that the charges against him were proven beyond doubt. Significantly, Ankamarao is no stranger to crime — he is already serving life imprisonment in two other separate murder cases. With this latest judgment, he now faces the death penalty in his third murder case. The court’s decision to impose the harshest punishment underscores the seriousness of the crime and marks a rare instance where a repeat offender already serving life sentences receives a capital sentence.

Akashapu Swamy Felicitated for Decades of Grassroots Service

TPN Correspondent | Tadepalligudem

In a heartfelt recognition of his unwavering dedication to both his profession and public service, Andhra Pradesh Tailors Development Federation Chairman Akashapu Swamy was felicitated in Tadepalligudem by a host of dignitaries, including National Youth Award recipient Gattim Manikyal Rao, Pericherla Foundation Chairman Pericherla Murali Krishnam Raju, Tatha Jagadish Kumar, and Arepalli Umamaheswara Rao. With over 40 years of experience in the tailoring industry, Akashapu Swamy has emerged as a respected figure in both his community and political circles. His roots in public service run deep—his father, Akashapu Appala Narasimha Murthy, served as a councillor during the early years of the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) in



the 1980s. Continuing this legacy, Swamy himself has remained a dedicated supporter of the TDP, earning a reputation as a man who worked tirelessly, often through the night, to unite party members and ensure seamless coordination, even offering free tailoring and logistics services to TDP campaigns. His family remains firmly embedded in the party's fabric. His daughter, Kakarla Subadra, is also actively

working with the TDP, and nearly three generations of the family have contributed in various capacities. Swamy’s appointment as Chairman of the Tailors Development Federation has been widely lauded by local citizens, who see it as a fitting recognition of a grassroots worker’s relentless commitment to both his craft and his political ideals. “This kind of recognition for a self-made individual from the working class is truly

inspiring,” said Pericherla Murali Krishnam Raju. “Swamy garu exemplifies the spirit of service and simplicity.” Several fellow servicemen and tailoring professionals who worked closely with Swamy over the years were also honoured during the ceremony, reinforcing the message that those who contribute quietly behind the scenes deserve the spotlight too. Swamy also shares a cordial relationship with Union Minister Ram Mohan Naidu, further strengthening his stature within the party and the broader political community. As his story continues to inspire fellow artisans and party workers, his journey from a humble tailor to a recognized leader stands as a testament to the value of dedication, loyalty, and perseverance.

BC students prove on par with corporate schools



TPN Correspondent | Vijayawada

State BC, EVWS Welfare, Handloom and Textiles Minister S. Savita proudly announced that students from BC Welfare Hostels and Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Gurukul institutions have achieved results comparable to those from top corporate educational institutions in this year’s 10th class and intermediate examinations. She attributed this success to the strong educational foundation laid by the cur-

rent government. Participating in a felicitation programme held at Tummalapalle Kala Kshetra in Vijayawada, the Minister said the awards are a recognition of BC students’ merit and hard work. A total of 200 students were honoured with bags, certificates, and mementos, while 22 top performers received cash awards—₹20,000 each for 12 first prize winners, ₹15,000 for 7 second prize winners, and ₹10,000 for 3 third prize winners.

As part of the ‘Thaliki Vandanam’ initiative, the government will provide ₹15,000 to every girl’s mother on June 15, based on the number of girl children pursuing education in each household. The Minister also announced that from June onwards, full meals with rice will be served in all hostels. She emphasized that toilet construction and basic infrastructure improvements in BC hostels and Gurukuls are being actively pursued. Stating that 108 out of the 109 BC Gurukuls in the state were established under the current administration, Savita praised CM Chandrababu Naidu for continuing the legacy of NT Rama Rao in empowering BCs through education. She assured that more Gurukuls will be established and government schools will be developed to match the standards of private institu-

tions. The Minister encouraged students to avoid excessive use of cell phones and focus on education. She appealed to parents to support their children’s interests and to citizens to come forward and contribute to the cause of education. BC Welfare Department Secretary Satyanarayana said that only persistent effort and clear goals can lead a student to success. Additional Director D. Chandrasekhar Raju urged students to maintain their momentum and strive for continued excellence. The programme concluded with floral tributes to reformer Jyotiba Phule and Murali Nayak, a martyr from the state. The event was attended by Dr. A. Mallikarjun, Director of BC Welfare, MJP Gurukul Society Secretary P. Madhavilatha, A. Krishna Mohan, and other officials.

IIT Tirupati Boosts Industry, Govt Ties for Innovation

TPN | C Shekar

Tirupati: The Indian Institute of Technology Tirupati (IIT Tirupati) has announced two major strategic collaborations that mark significant progress in strengthening industry-academia ties and advancing innovation in engineering and technology.

In a landmark development, Kia India, one of India’s leading mass premium car manufacturers, has signed a five-year Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with IIT Tirupati. This partnership, backed by an investment of ₹35 crores from 2025 to 2029, aims to foster research-driven innovation and nurture industry-ready talent focused on advanced manufacturing, electric mobility, and sustainable automotive technologies. A key highlight of this collaboration is the planned establishment of a state-of-the-art Makers Laboratory, a cross-disciplinary innova-



tion space where students will design and develop prototypes, thereby enhancing IIT Tirupati’s role as a hub for applied research. Kia India will also initiate internship programs offering Pre-Placement Offers (PPOs) and provide scholarships to deserving M.Tech students. Mr. Gwanggu Lee, Managing Director and CEO of Kia India, said, “This partnership goes beyond an MoU—it’s a convergence of vision and commitment toward shaping the future of mobility and engineering in

India.” Complementing this industrial collaboration, IIT Tirupati has been appointed the official knowledge partner for the Tirupati Spoke of the Ratan Tata Innovation Hub (RTIH) by the Government of Andhra Pradesh. The Tirupati Spoke will act as a regional catalyst for startup growth and MSME support, partnering with prominent industrial groups such as Adani, Amara Raja, and Navayuga Engineering. IIT Tirupati will support this

initiative through mentorship, research collaboration, and solution development aligned with regional and national challenges, contributing to the state’s innovation ecosystem and the national Viksit Bharat Mission. Prof. K. N. Satyanarayana, Director of IIT Tirupati, stated, “These strategic partnerships resonate deeply with our mission to drive research excellence and contribute meaningfully to India’s socio-economic development.” Alongside these partnerships, IIT Tirupati continues to expand its infrastructure with robust government funding. Phase A investments totaled ₹1,444 crore, covering civil works, furniture, equipment, and recurring expenditure. Phase B, recently approved, boosts the budget to ₹2,313 crore, reflecting the government’s commitment to positioning IIT Tirupati as a premier national institute.

CASTE CENSUS AND WAR RHETORIC

Merging Aggressive and Progressive Hinduism for BJP's Political Gain

The Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) simultaneous endorsement of a caste census and assertive military posture against Pakistan marks a strategic fusion of seemingly opposing ideologies: caste-based inclusion and religious nationalism. Far from being contradictory, these moves signal a sophisticated reworking of Hindutva politics to consolidate a wider Hindu vote by merging caste diversity with majoritarian unity.

Traditionally, Hindutva ideologues denied the centrality of caste in Hindu identity, portraying it as a colonial construct or an aberration introduced by Islamic rule. Yet caste remains intrinsic to Hindu social identity. The demand for a caste census, long resisted by both Congress and BJP, is now being embraced as a political tool. Rahul Gandhi's sudden invocation of Kanshi Ram's slogan, *"Jiski jitni sankhya bhaari, uski utni hissedari,"* and BJP's abrupt support for caste enumeration before the Bihar elections, indicate its rising electoral importance.

Opposition parties hope to use caste data to highlight upper-caste dominance and push for greater representation of backward castes. However, BJP's



shift does not signify a dilution of Hindutva, but rather its adaptation. In the

face of growing backward-caste consciousness, BJP is redefining Hinduism

as a civil religion that includes lower castes, while maintaining its aggres-

sive stance against minorities.

Hindutva's nationalist project has always relied on a unifying enemy—most often the Muslim 'other'. This antagonism is both ideological and performative, reinforced through everyday bigotry and periodic military actions like the recent retaliation against Pakistan after the Pahalgam attack. It fosters a sense of Hindu unity that supersedes caste divisions.

In this context, the caste census functions less as a tool for dismantling caste hierarchies and more as a mechanism to manage diversity within a broader Hindu framework. While it may temporarily destabilize BJP's upper-caste base, it ultimately contributes to building a sublated Hinduism—one that is both aggressive in its nationalism and inclusive in caste.

This fusion creates a deeper ideological citizenship rooted in Hindu identity and sustained through the othering of non-Hindus. Thus, the caste census, far from undermining Hindutva, could reinforce its hold—making it an unlikely but potent ally in BJP's majoritarian project.

Trump's Misguided Equivalence of India and Pakistan Undermines Diplomatic Credibility

Former U.S. President Donald Trump's recent comments on the India-Pakistan conflict following the Pahalgam terror attack reveal a troubling diplomatic posture that equates both nations, disregarding the stark contrast between a democratic India and a Pakistan that continues to sponsor cross-border terrorism. This false equivalence not only diminishes India's justified response to terrorism but also signals a lack of understanding of South Asia's complex geopolitical realities.

The Pahalgam attack, orchestrated by Pakistan-backed militants, occurred during U.S. Vice-President JD Vance's visit to India. Yet, despite condemnations from the U.S. and others, these statements hold little value without direct attribution of responsibility to Pakistan. Even the UN Security Council's statement, while calling for accountability, stopped short of naming Pakistan—a reflection of diplomatic limitations, given its current seat on the Council.

Trump's statements, including his offer to mediate the Kashmir issue and his boast of brokering a ceasefire be-



fore any official bilateral announcement, undermine India's sovereignty. Worse, they suggest India yielded to U.S. pressure, when in reality, India had carefully crafted a calibrated military response targeting only terror infrastructure, with built-in mechanisms for de-escalation.

The G7 statement mirrored this imbalance, urging both nations to exercise restraint and seek a diplomatic solution—again ignoring the root cause: Pakistan's use of terrorism as state policy. Calls for dialogue and de-escalation are meaningless if they overlook the repeated collapse of talks due to Pakistan's continued provocations.

Trump's rhetoric is not only diplomatically careless but

also potentially damaging to India-U.S. ties. His claim of threatening both countries with trade consequences and dangling future trade incentives is especially absurd given the disproportionate economic ties—India's \$200 billion trade relationship with the U.S. vastly outweighs Pakistan's \$7.4 billion.

India must reassess its approach to engaging with Trump's administration. Strategic pushback may be necessary to protect national interests and reaffirm that issues like Kashmir are bilateral, as agreed under the Simla Agreement. While the U.S. remains a critical partner, India cannot allow its security concerns to be trivialized under the guise of peace-brokering or misplaced neutrality.

Beyond Obscenity: India Needs Smarter Speech Regulation, Not Blanket Bans

Late last month, a Supreme Court bench led by incoming Chief Justice BR Gavai urged the Union government to consider fresh legislation to curb obscene content on streaming platforms and social media. The concern is familiar: web series are undermining public morality, and social media is eroding our civic discourse.

Yet, this call for greater censorship ignores key legal and practical distinctions between media types. India's courts have long upheld nuanced views on free speech. In the AVEEK SARKAR case (2014), the Supreme Court ruled that a nude photo of Boris Becker was not obscene, noting it would not provoke lustful thoughts in the average person. But in 2025, nearly every provocative post or series is quickly labeled indecent or immoral, often with little regard for context.

At the center of the debate is the issue of platform asymmetry. Traditional TV broadcasts are subject to stricter content norms because of their family-oriented, one-size-fits-all nature. In contrast, digital media is personalized and privately consumed, often with tools



like age filters and parental controls. Recognizing this difference, India's 2021 streaming rules avoided imposing TV-style censorship on OTT platforms. Most advanced democracies similarly tailor their content standards to media type, acknowledging the role of user controls and private consumption.

Modern regulation, as global examples show, must prioritize harm reduction over offense avoidance. The UK's Online Safety Act focuses on "priority illegal content" like terrorism and child exploitation. Australia and Canada have similar laws targeting demonstrably harmful speech. None equate generic "offense" with real-world danger.

India should take a risk-based approach, focusing on curbing hate speech, child abuse material, and terrorism rather than lewd jokes or bold dialogue. Importantly, media literacy must be strengthened to build a resilient society. The EU and Canada invest in such initiatives; India's National Education Policy gestures toward it, but implementation remains weak.

Rather than chasing every risqué scene, India should invest in smarter enforcement, public education, and civil society collaboration. Obscenity may offend—but unchecked hate speech and extremism cause real, lasting harm. Let's protect free expression while targeting speech that truly endangers democratic life.

India's Economy Poised to Withstand War-Like Challenges Amid Regional Tensions

As India emerges from a brief yet tense confrontation with Pakistan, attention is returning to economic matters, particularly growth prospects. Sanjiv Puri, President of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), recently expressed optimism that India can achieve a 6.5% growth rate in the fiscal year 2025–26, crediting the country's strong economic fundamentals. However, he also stressed the importance of setting more ambitious goals of 7–8% to secure long-term prosperity.

While Puri avoided directly referencing the border conflict, he acknowledged that geopolitical uncertainties are impacting investment flows. Sectors such as energy, transportation, chemicals, metals, and hospitality continue to attract interest, but investor confidence could waver if regional instability persists. Though the recent



hostilities lasted only a few days, the underlying issues remain unresolved. The ceasefire declared was fragile—marred by cross-border fire even on its announcement day.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's statement that Operation Sindoor has been "suspended" rather than concluded further underscores the uncer-

tainty. He warned that any renewed terrorist activity from Pakistan would invite swift retaliation. This ambiguous state of peace raises concerns about India's economic momentum, especially regarding foreign direct investment (FDI).

Companies like Apple are already shifting supply chains to India to avoid tariffs on Chinese exports, with CEO Tim Cook indicating that iPhones for the U.S. market will soon be sourced largely from India. Similar interest is rising under the "China Plus One" strategy. However, prolonged conflict could cast doubts over India's stability, a key attraction for multinational investors. Another concern is the security of critical infrastructure in the western states of Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Maharashtra—home to oil and gas

platforms and major manufacturing hubs. Any disruption in these regions could significantly impact national productivity.

Nonetheless, India's resilience remains a powerful asset. The country has previously weathered global disruptions like the Ukraine-Russia war and the COVID-19 pandemic. Inflation has remained under control despite external shocks, and the economy adapted by sourcing discounted crude from Russia.

While short-term disruptions, especially in the northern belt, may occur, the broader economic framework appears robust enough to absorb temporary shocks. India is likely to maintain its trajectory as a stable and growing economy, even amidst regional tensions.



"Not A Spokesperson": Shashi Tharoor After Congress' 'Lakshman Rekha' Remark
TPN Correspondent | Delhi

Congress MP Shashi Tharoor clarified on Thursday that his recent remarks on the India-Pakistan conflict were made in his personal capacity and not on behalf of the Congress party. The Lok Sabha MP from Thiruvananthapuram emphasized that he was speaking as "an Indian and a proud citizen" when he shared his perspective on the situation during interviews with international media.

Speaking to reporters, Tharoor said, "People seem to think I have knowledge on some of these subjects, so they ask me for my views. I always clarify that I am expressing my personal opinion, not the party line." His comments come amid reports that some Congress leaders believe he crossed the "Lakshman Rekha" — a metaphorical line implying overstepping boundaries — with repeated remarks on the sensitive issue.

Tharoor denied being aware of any formal criticism from the party. "I was present at the Congress Working Committee meeting and no such concern was raised while I was there. If something was said after I left, I haven't been informed yet. I'll respond if and when I am," he added.

Responding to party colleague Jairam Ramesh's recent remark that Tharoor is not the party's official spokesperson, Tharoor agreed, stating, "He is absolutely correct. I am not the party's communications in-charge, nor am I a spokesperson of the government."

He defended his decision to speak to foreign media, saying it was essential for India's narrative to be represented globally. "There was a relative lack of our viewpoint being heard internationally. When media from Europe, the US, and the Middle East approached me, I shared my view based on my understanding of India's position," he said.

Tharoor stressed that he had no access to classified information and was only offering informed analysis as someone familiar with global affairs. "People are free to disagree. But this is my view and I am entitled to it."

Can Timelines Be Imposed?" President's Big Question To Supreme Court

Seeks Clarification on Governors' Role in Bill Assent Process

TPN Correspondent | New Delhi

A month after the Supreme Court's landmark verdict in the Tamil Nadu Bills case, President Droupadi Murmu has formally sought the Court's opinion on key constitutional questions concerning the role of Governors in clearing state legislation. Using her powers under Article 143 of the Constitution, the President asked whether timelines can be imposed on Governors for granting assent to Bills and if their discretion is subject to judicial review.

The query follows an April ruling by Justices JB Pardiwala and R Mahadevan, which found Governor RN Ravi's delay in clearing 10 Bills from the Tamil Nadu legislature to be "illegal and arbitrary." The Court had set a three-month deadline for Governors and the President to act on Bills re-passed by the legislature.

President Murmu's letter raises several constitutional concerns: Is the Governor bound by the advice of the Council of Ministers when dealing with Bills under Article 200? Can judicial timelines dictate how the President or Governors exercise discretion under Articles



200 and 201? And is such discretion justiciable, considering Article 361 grants immunity to the President and Governors from court proceedings?

The Supreme Court, in its earlier verdict, acknowledged that while its advisory opinion under Article 143 is non-binding, it holds significant constitutional value. The bench had emphasized that only constitutional courts can determine the legality of a Bill and that the executive must refrain from making such assessments.

The judgment also distinguished between political and legal considerations in assessing Bills. While courts avoid interfering in political matters, they may intervene when constitutional interpretation is required. It further noted that if the President withholds assent despite the Court's advice, reasons must be recorded. With newly sworn-in Chief Justice BR Gavai at the helm, the Court may now decide whether to constitute a Constitution Bench or affirm the two-judge ruling, potentially reshaping how federal legislative processes are handled in India.

10 Militants Killed in Gunbattle with Assam Rifles in Manipur's Chandel District

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

At least 10 militants were killed during a fierce encounter with an Assam Rifles unit in Manipur's Chandel district on Wednesday, May 14, officials confirmed. The operation, launched near the Indo-Myanmar border, is still ongoing, according to security forces.

The firefight took place near New Samtal village in the Khengjoy tehsil of Chandel district, a region known for frequent insurgent activity due to its proximity to the international border. The operation was initiated based on specific intelligence inputs regarding the movement of armed insurgent cadres in the area.

Eastern Command of the Indian Army shared an official statement on X (formerly Twitter), stating: "Acting on specific intelligence on the movement of armed cadres near New Samtal village, Khengjoy tehsil, Chandel district, close to



the Indo-Myanmar border, an Assam Rifles unit under Spear Corps launched an operation on May 14."

During the mission, the troops reportedly came under fire from the suspected militants. In response, the Assam Rifles personnel swiftly redeployed and returned fire in a measured and controlled manner. The well-coordinated counteraction led to the neutralisation of ten armed insurgents.

A significant cache of arms and ammunition was recovered from

the site following the encounter. Officials did not immediately provide details about the identities or affiliations of the deceased militants, although they are suspected to belong to insurgent groups operating in the region, some of which use the border areas for shelter and cross-border movement.

Security forces have cordoned off the area and a combing operation is underway to track any remaining militants and secure the region.

The Chandel district, which borders Myanmar, has historically been a hotspot for insurgent activity. Wednesday's operation underscores the continued challenges faced by security forces in maintaining stability in the northeastern state, which has seen periodic ethnic and insurgent violence.

Authorities are expected to release more information once the ongoing operation concludes and the area is fully secured.



"Complicated, Nothing Decided Till": S Jaishankar On India-US Trade Deal
TPN Correspondent | Delhi

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar confirmed on Thursday that discussions for a comprehensive India-US trade deal are still ongoing, describing the process as "complicated" and cautioning that "nothing is decided till everything is." His comments come amid renewed trade tensions and evolving diplomatic relations between the two nations.

Speaking at the inauguration of Honduras' new embassy in New Delhi, Jaishankar emphasized that any trade agreement must be mutually beneficial. "It has to work for both countries. Until that is done, any judgment would be premature," he told reporters.

His statement follows claims by US President Donald Trump earlier in the day during a business forum in Doha, where Trump said India had offered a deal involving "literally no tariffs" on US goods. Trump has reimposed tariffs during his current term, including a 27% reciprocal tariff on India in April, which has since been suspended until July 9.

Despite the tariffs, India opted not to retaliate, instead signaling its intent to remain a reliable trading partner. New Delhi has since reduced tariffs on select US goods such as bourbon whiskey and motorcycles, and has de-linked tariff revisions from political pressures.

In the backdrop of these developments, a high-level Indian delegation led by Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal is set to visit the US from May 17 to 20 to further the negotiations. The potential trade agreement is seen as a major opportunity to increase bilateral trade to over \$500 billion by 2030.

The proposed deal is expected to cover 24 categories of goods, ranging from agricultural products like soybeans and corn to military hardware. In exchange, India is seeking tariff concessions for its key export sectors such as textiles, leather goods, furniture, automotive components, and gems and jewellery.

Turkish Firm Operating At Indian Airports Loses Security Clearance After Op Sindoor

TPN Correspondent | Delhi

In a significant move amid rising diplomatic tensions, the Indian government has revoked the security clearance of Turkish firm Celebi Ground Handling India Private Limited, which manages critical airport services at nine major Indian airports. The decision, announced on May 15 by the Ministry of Civil Aviation, was taken "in the interest of national security" following Turkey's open support for Pakistan during India's ongoing Operation Sindoor.

Celebi, which also manages cargo operations at Delhi International Airport under a separate entity—Celebi Delhi Cargo Terminal Management India—has now been officially removed from operations. The Delhi airport has terminated its association with the company, marking India's first direct economic action against a Turkish en-

terprise.

Junior Civil Aviation Minister Murlidhar Mohol confirmed the development, stating, "Celebi Airport Services India Pvt Ltd is a Turkey-based company providing ground handling at multiple Indian airports. Given Turkey's open support for Pakistan and considering national security concerns, the company has been banned."

Turkey's alignment with Pakistan, especially during the recent military escalation, has raised alarms in New Delhi. Intelligence reports linked Turkish-made drones such as the Bayraktar TB2 and Asisguard SONGAR to attacks on Indian positions on May 8. Furthermore, Turkey's military collaboration with Pakistan and the presence of a Turkish warship and air force aircraft in Karachi added to the urgency of the decision.



In response, Celebi Aviation empha-

sized its operational independence from Turkey, stating it is a global

company with over 65 years in aviation and that its Indian operations are run by Indian professionals. The company underscored its commitment to corporate neutrality and adherence to international standards.

Public sentiment in India has also turned sharply against Turkey. A sweeping "Boycott Turkey" movement is trending across social media, prompting Indian tourists to cancel travel plans and academic institutions like Jawaharlal Nehru University to cut ties with Turkish counterparts. The Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) is also considering a complete trade boycott of Turkey and Azerbaijan.

Celebi's expulsion reflects a broader strategic shift in India's foreign policy, as it strengthens ties with nations traditionally opposed to Turkey, including Greece, Armenia, and the UAE.

"Young, Attractive Guy": Trump's Big Praise For Terrorist-Turned-President

In Historic Meeting with Syrian Leader

TPN Correspondent | Riyadh

In a groundbreaking shift in U.S. foreign policy, President Donald Trump met Syria's interim president, Ahmad al-Sharaa, in Riyadh on Wednesday, marking the first meeting between a U.S. president and a Syrian leader in 25 years. Al-Sharaa, once a leader of the rebel group Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), which was affiliated with al-Qaeda and labeled a terrorist organization by the U.S., is now Syria's interim president after toppling Bashar al-Assad in December 2024.

The meeting, arranged at the request of Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, came one day after Trump lifted extensive sanctions on Syria, a move that has caused a stir internationally. The sanctions, which have been in place since 1979, were imposed due to Syria's support for Palestinian militant groups. However, Trump's decision to ease sanctions has provided a potential lifeline to the war-torn country, still grappling with the aftermath of years of conflict.

During the meeting, Trump praised al-Sharaa, who was once known as Abu Mohammad al-Julani, calling him a "young, attractive guy" with a "very strong past"



and a "fighter." Trump expressed optimism about al-Sharaa's ability to lead Syria, stating, "He's got a real shot at holding it together." The U.S. president also mentioned his conversations with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, who is reportedly friendly with al-Sharaa and believes in his potential to stabilize Syria.

Despite his praise, Trump made no commitment to removing Syria from the U.S. list of state sponsors of terrorism, which

still hinders foreign investment in the country. Trump also urged al-Sharaa to normalize relations with Israel, but it remains unclear how this diplomatic push will unfold.

The meeting raised eyebrows globally due to al-Sharaa's past as a jihadist and his long history of fighting U.S. forces. Al-Sharaa, now donning a suit and tie, has left behind his militant past, signaling a new era for Syria under his leadership.

Pakistani Court Allows Lie Detector and Facial Analysis Tests for Imran Khan in May 9 Violence Cases

TPN Correspondent | Lahore

A Pakistani anti-terrorism court has granted permission to law enforcement agencies to conduct polygraph (lie detector) and photogrammetric (facial and voice recognition) tests on former Prime Minister Imran Khan in connection with multiple terrorism cases linked to the May 9, 2023 violence.

On Wednesday, Judge Manzer Ali Gill of the Anti-Terrorism Court-I (ATC-I) approved the prosecution's request to conduct the tests within 12 days at Adiala Jail in Rawalpindi, where Khan has been held since August 2023. These tests pertain to 12 terrorism-related cases, including the high-profile attack on the Lahore Corps Commander House, commonly known as Jinnah House.

The violent protests erupted on May 9, 2023, following Imran Khan's dramatic arrest by paramilitary Rangers from the Islamabad High Court premises. The unrest saw supporters of Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party allegedly van-



dalising several military and intelligence facilities, including the Mianwali airbase, the ISI office in Faisalabad, and even the Army's General Headquarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi.

Khan's lawyer, Barrister Salman Safdar, strongly opposed the prosecution's petition, questioning the timing and legality of the tests. He highlighted that the request came 727 days after the incidents, and pointed out that Khan has already

secured bail in 21 terrorism cases. According to Safdar, Khan has lawfully recorded statements in all the relevant cases, which were accepted by the Lahore High Court.

Special Prosecutor Rana Aazar countered the arguments, stating that the Supreme Court permits such investigative tools to fulfill legal requirements. He insisted that conducting a voice match test is essential for the integrity of the investigation. However, Khan has refused to participate in the tests without his lawyer present, raising further legal complexities.

Despite the defense's objections, the judge sided with the prosecution, authorizing the polygraph and photogrammetric testing to be conducted within the next 12 days.

The development marks a significant turn in the ongoing legal challenges faced by the PTI founder, who remains incarcerated amid a slew of charges stemming from political unrest and other alleged offenses.

5.1 Magnitude Earthquake Strikes Near Ankara, Turkey; No Immediate Reports of Damage

TPN Correspondent | Turkey

Strong tremors were felt in Turkey's capital, Ankara, on Thursday afternoon following a 5.1 magnitude earthquake that struck northeast of the town of Kulu, according to the European-Mediterranean Seismological Centre (EMSC). The quake was recorded at approximately 3:46 p.m. local time.

The epicenter was located around 14 kilometers northeast of Kulu in Turkey's Konya province. Although the tremor sent shockwaves through Ankara and its surrounding areas, no immediate reports of damage or injuries have been reported. State-backed Iranian news outlet Mehr News also confirmed the tremors were significant but not destructive.

The seismic event has rekindled memories of the catastrophic earthquakes that devastated Turkey and Syria in February 2023. During that tragedy, two powerful quakes measuring 7.8 and 7.5 on the Richter scale struck in quick succession, causing widespread destruction and claiming more than 59,000 lives in Turkey and around 8,000 in Syria. Those quakes left tens of thousands homeless and triggered a massive international aid response.

While Thursday's quake was much small-



er in comparison, its proximity to major population centers like Ankara heightened public concern. Turkish authorities have assured citizens that emergency services are monitoring the situation closely and will provide updates should any aftershocks or structural damage be reported.

This latest quake comes just a day after a separate 6.1 magnitude earthquake struck near Fry, Greece, in the early hours of Wednesday. According to the United States Geological Survey (USGS), that earthquake occurred at a depth of 78 kilometers and was felt across a wide region, including in Cairo, Egypt; Israel; Lebanon; Turkey; and

Jordan.

Turkey sits on several active fault lines, making it one of the most earthquake-prone countries in the world. The North Anatolian Fault, in particular, has been responsible for several devastating earthquakes in Turkish history.

Geological experts continue to stress the importance of earthquake preparedness, especially in densely populated urban areas. Residents in Ankara and nearby regions have been urged to stay alert, although officials do not currently anticipate major aftershocks from this particular seismic event.



"Don't Want You Building In India": Donald Trump To Apple CEO Tim Cook

In a recent business event in Doha, US President Donald Trump made it clear to Apple CEO Tim Cook that he does not want the tech giant expanding its manufacturing operations in India. Trump voiced concerns over the high tariffs in India, suggesting that the country can "take care of themselves" when it comes to production.

"I have a little problem with Tim Cook," Trump said. "I told him, 'You are coming up with \$500 billion, but now I hear you are building all over India. I don't want you building in India.'" He explained that India's high tariff structure makes it difficult to sell products in the country. "India is one of the highest tariff nations in the world," Trump added, emphasizing the challenges Apple could face.

Trump further claimed that India had made a deal with the United States, offering to charge no tariffs on US goods, but such an offer has not been confirmed by New Delhi. "They offered us a deal where basically they have agreed to charge us literally no tariffs," Trump said. "We put up with all the plants you built in China for years. We're not interested in you building in India. India can take care of themselves."

At the same time, Trump highlighted that Apple is set to expand its production in the United States, a move in line with his broader "America First" trade policies. This nudge to Tim Cook comes at a pivotal moment as Apple plans to shift more of its manufacturing operations away from China, partly due to tariffs imposed during Trump's administration.

Currently, Apple operates three plants in India — two in Tamil Nadu and one in Karnataka, with Foxconn and Tata Group managing them. The company is also planning to open two additional plants in the country. According to reports, Tim Cook has expressed hopes that a significant portion of iPhones sold in the U.S. will eventually be manufactured in India, marking a shift in the company's production strategy.

Putin Skips Ukraine Talks, Sends Experienced Russian Delegation

TPN Correspondent | Russia

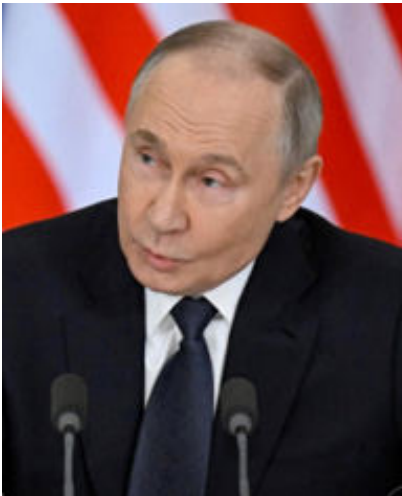
Russian President Vladimir Putin announced on May 14, 2025, that he would not personally attend upcoming direct peace talks with Ukraine, but instead, a seasoned team of negotiators would represent Russia. This decision follows Putin's earlier proposal to hold the talks, which had led to speculation about his potential participation.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy had stated that he would attend the talks if Putin himself were present. However, with Putin opting out, the Russian delegation will be led by prominent officials who played key roles in previous negotiations. The team includes Vladimir Medinsky, a presidential adviser who was involved in the early stages of the 2022 talks, and Alexander Fomin, Russia's Deputy Defence Minister.

Another notable member of the delegation is Igor Kostyukov, the director of Russia's Main Intelligence Directorate, known as the GRU. Kostyukov, who is also the Chief of the Main Directorate of the Russian Armed Forces, is considered a seasoned negotiator with significant experience in military and intelligence matters. Deputy Foreign Minister Mikhail Galuzin is also part of the team.

The talks, which are aimed at resolving the ongoing war, are crucial for both sides, with hopes that a diplomatic solution can be reached. The last set of negotiations between Russia and Ukraine took place in early 2022, with rounds held in Belarus and Türkiye. However, those talks collapsed, and the war has continued ever since.

While the absence of Putin from these talks could signal that Russia is not immediately seeking peace, it is also a reminder of the high-stakes nature of the conflict. As Russia and Ukraine continue to wage war, the composition of the Russian delegation shows that Moscow is still engaged in diplomatic efforts, even if Putin himself is not at the table.



Markets Rally Sharply; Nifty Crosses 25,000, Sensex Soars 1,200 Points on Broad-Based Buying

Domestic stock markets were buoyed on Thursday. Benchmark indices ended with huge gains. The indices, which started flat in the morning due to mixed signals from global markets, unexpectedly rebounded after noon. This was due to investors rushing to buy. With this, the Nifty crossed the 25000 level. Auto, realty, metal, media and finance shares were the drivers for this. Overall, the Nifty gained 395 points and the Sensex gained 1200 points. Gold prices fell as uncertainty eased.



The BSE Sensex, which closed at 81,330 in the previous session, opened at 81,354 on Thursday. It touched an intraday low of 80,762. It reached an intraday high of 82,718. It finally closed at 82,530 with a gain of 1200 points. The NSE Nifty, which opened at 24,694, touched a low of 24,494 and a high of 25,116. It closed at 25,062, up 395 points. The Nifty Bank rose 554 points to settle at 55,355.

49 companies in the Nifty50 gained and one lost. Hero Moto, JSW Steel, Tata Motors, Trent, Shriram Finance were the top gainers. IndusInd Bank lost slightly. Mid and smallcap indices rose sharply today. Auto, realty, metal; media, finance, oil, IT, private bank indices were strong. Consumption, healthcare, pharma, telecom, FMCG, and PSU banks did not fare well.

Market breadth favors buyers on NSE today. Out of 2942 stocks traded, 1980 gained and 890 lost. 59 stocks touched their 52-week highs and 11 stocks touched their 52-week lows. 175 stocks reached the upper circuit and 27 stocks reached the lower circuit.

The rupee weakened slightly against the dollar and settled at 85.54. The number of shareholders on NSE crossed one lakh. Morgan Staley has given an equal weight rating to Muthoot Finance with a target price of Rs. 2400. Nomura has given a buy rating to Hindustan Aeronautics with a target price of Rs. 4700. HSBC has maintained a buy rating on Berger Paints with a target price of Rs. 620. Page Industries' Q4 profit rose 51.6% to Rs 164 crore from Rs 108 crore. Tube Investment's profit rose 30% to Rs 814 crore from Rs 248 crore. It is noteworthy that there was a one-time gain of Rs 569 crore. Welspun Enterprises' net profit rose 30% to Rs 100 crore from Rs 77 crore. Vinati Organics' profit rose 18.3% to Rs 123 crore from Rs 104 crore. 20 lakh shares changed hands in LT Finance. ITC Hotels' net profit rose 20.5% to Rs 215 crore from Rs 259 crore. South Indian Bank's



net profit rose 19% to Rs 342 crore from Rs 287 crore. Cochin Shipyard's net profit rose from Rs. 259 crore to Rs. 287 crore, a growth rate of 10%.

1. HCL Technologies (HCLTECH)

HCLTech

HCL Technologies is a leading Indian IT services company, providing software, consulting, and digital transformation services globally, headquartered in Noida. Announced plans in 2021 to create 12,000 new jobs in the U.S. over five years, with over 2,000 graduates to be recruited in 36 months. Focus on organic expansion, with consistent cash flow conversion (FCF/PAT ex-acquisition) above 100% for three years, outperforming large-cap peers. Investments in AI, cloud, and cybersecurity to drive client demand in BFSI, healthcare, and manufacturing sectors. Scaling up early career programs like "Rise at HCL" to build a skilled workforce in key markets like the U.S. HCLTech is well-positioned for growth in digital services, but U.S. tariff uncertainties and weak discretionary IT spending may pose challenges, as noted in the broader IT sector outlook.

2. Trent Limited (TRENT)

Trent, a Tata Group company, operates retail chains like Westside, Zudio, and Star Bazaar, focusing on fashion, lifestyle, and hypermar-

ket retailing. Strong revenue growth driven by Zudio's expansion and festive season demand, though specific financials are not detailed in the provided data. Trent has been a top performer, gaining significantly in 2024, with analysts noting its consistent score improvement and upside potential. Recognized for its robust growth in India's retail sector, particularly in tier-2 and tier-3 cities. Aggressive rollout of Zudio stores, targeting 300+ new stores annually, focusing on affordable fashion in smaller cities. Trent's focus on affordable retail and rapid expansion positions it for sustained growth, but competition from e-commerce giants and rising operational costs are risks.



3. Tata Motors (TATAMOTORS)

Tata Motors, part of the Tata Group, is a leading Indian automotive manufacturer, producing cars, trucks, and buses, with subsidiaries like Jaguar Land Rover. Results awaited, but the company reported a market cap of ₹2,64,615 crore, down 26.2% in the past year. Revenue was ₹4,39,695 crore,



with a profit of ₹28,149 crore. Shares faced pressure, with promoter holding decreasing by 3.83% over three years to 42.6%. Launched a co-branded Diesel Exhaust Fluid (DEF) with HPCL in March 2025 to enhance commercial vehicle performance, available at 23,000 fuel stations. Scaling up EV production, with new models planned under the Tata.ev brand to capture India's growing EV market. Tata Motors is poised for growth in EVs and premium vehicles, but declining stock performance and global economic challenges, including U.S. tariffs, pose risks.

4. DLF Limited (DLF)



DLF is India's largest real estate developer, focusing on residential, commercial, and retail properties, primarily in the NCR and other metro cities. Noted for positive momentum in 2021, with potential for upside in 2024 due to real estate demand. Benefits from India's urban housing boom and commercial leasing recovery post-COVID. Launching premium residential projects in Gurugram and Mumbai, targeting high-net-worth individuals. Expanding office and retail portfolios, with new leasing agreements in DLF Cyber City. Continued focus on lowering debt through asset monetization and strong cash flows. DLF is well-placed to capitalize on India's real estate recovery, but interest rate hikes and regulatory changes could impact affordability and demand.

5. Grasim Industries (GRASIM)

Grasim, part of the Aditya Birla Group, is a diversified conglomerate with businesses in cement (UltraTech), textiles, chemicals, and financial services. Steady performance in cement and chemicals, with UltraTech driving growth, though specific financials are not provided in the data. Listed among top companies with consistent score improvement, indicating upside potential. Benefits from strong cement demand and diversification into paints and financial services. Grasim's diversified portfolio and cement leadership ensure growth, but competition in paints and raw material cost pressures are challenges.



Passenger Vehicle Sales Rise by 4% in April; Two-Wheelers See 17% Dip, Reports SIAM

India's passenger vehicle segment saw significant growth in April 2025, with a 4% increase in dispatches compared to the same month last year. The Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) reported that 348,847 units were dispatched in April, up from 335,629 units in April 2024. This increase marks the highest-ever sales recorded for passenger vehicles in April, with a growth of 3.9% compared to last year. Rajesh Menon, the Director General of SIAM, attributed the positive trend to strong demand and favorable market conditions.



On the other hand, the two-wheeler market witnessed a significant decline. Dispatches dropped by 17% year-on-year, amounting to 1,458,784 units in April, down from 1,751,393 units in the same period last year. Among two-wheelers, motorcycles were particularly affected, with a 23% decline in sales, totaling 871,666 units. Scooters also saw a reduction of 6%, with sales standing at 548,370 units, down from 581,277 units in April 2024. Moped sales dipped 8%, with 38,748 units dispatched, compared to 41,924 units in April 2024.

The decline in two-wheeler sales has been attributed to a high base effect from the previous year, which saw a stronger-than-usu-

al performance. However, experts predict that the market for two-wheelers is expected to pick up in the coming months as demand recovers.

In the three-wheeler segment, there was a slight year-on-year decline, with dispatches reaching 49,441 units in April 2025, showing a marginal drop.

SIAM also highlighted the smooth transition of the automotive industry into the second stage of On-Board Diagnostics (OBD 2) regulation for two- and three-wheelers, which came into effect from April 2025. Additionally, the rollout of E-20 compliant gasoline vehicles started this month, in line with the country's commitment to sustainability.

The trends indicate a robust future for passenger vehicles while challenges remain for the two-wheeler segment.

TCS Ranked 45th in Kantar's Most Valuable Global Brands 2025 with \$57.3 Billion Valuation

Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), India's leading IT giant, has been valued at \$57.3 billion, marking a significant 28% year-on-year growth, according to Kantar's BrandZ Most Valuable Global Brands 2025 report. This has propelled TCS to the 45th spot globally in a ranking of 100 leading brands across various industries.



TCS's rise reflects its continued investment in brand-building efforts, with a strong global presence and strategic sponsorship programs. The company's brand equity has been further bolstered by high-impact partnerships in global sports, including marathons, customer-centric innovations, and excellence in marketing. Martin Guerrieria, Head of Kantar BrandZ, noted TCS's ability to innovate at scale, especially with the integration of AI into its service offerings.

The report highlights Apple, Google, and Microsoft as the top three brands globally, valued at \$1,299.65 billion, \$944.137 billion, and \$944.13 billion, respectively. Other Indian brands making it to the list include HDFC Bank (56th,

\$44.95 billion), Bharti Airtel (66th, \$37.09 billion), and Infosys (73rd, \$33.09 billion).

In a separate brand audit by Momentum-ITSMA, TCS's global brand awareness among business executives was recorded at an impressive 95%, a sharp increase from 29% in 2010. This improvement underscores the company's growing influence and recognition worldwide.

TCS's continued focus on humanizing technology and creating impactful experiences has helped establish a strong connection with consumers. In ad-

dition to its brand presence, TCS sponsors 14 major global running events, including the TCS New York City Marathon and TCS London Marathon, which together engage over 600,000 runners annually. These events not only contribute significantly to local economies but also raise millions for charitable causes.

As TCS continues to expand its global footprint, its growing brand value and influence reflect the company's commitment to innovation, sustainability, and building lasting relationships with its customers.

Algeria’s Bold Move: Transforming the Sahara Desert into a Global Tourist Destination

Algeria, Africa’s largest country, is undergoing a transformative shift in its tourism policy as it looks to position itself as a major global destination by 2030. Traditionally conservative and self-reliant in its approach, Algeria had long kept international tourism at arm’s length.

But that has now changed dramatically.

In a strategic move to open up its vast desert landscape to the world, the Algerian government introduced a visa-on-arrival policy in January 2023 for all international visitors heading to the Sahara region. This move, excluding only nationals from Malaysia, Seychelles, and neighboring Maghreb countries, has drastically simplified the entry process. Now, tourists can obtain a 30-day visa upon arrival by paying a fee ranging between \$38 and \$376, depending on their stay duration.

This liberalized visa policy has triggered a tourism boom. The country welcomed 3.3 million tourists in 2023—a 45% increase from the previous year. Notably, 2.2 million of these were international visitors, according to the Algerian Ministry of Tourism and Handicrafts.

A key attraction driving this surge is the Tassili n’Ajjer National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site located deep in the Sahara. Known for its surreal, tree-like sandstone formations and ancient rock art, the park houses over 15,000 prehistoric engravings and paintings, some dating



back to 10,000 BCE. These artworks vividly depict early human life and the now-extinct fauna of the region, offering a unique glimpse into the past.

To further enrich the tourist experience, Algeria is promoting culturally immersive desert expeditions led by members of the indigenous Tuareg community, known for their deep knowledge of the desert and unique heritage.

To accommodate the rising interest, Algeria is also increasing the number of direct flights from European capitals and strengthening border security to ensure traveler safety.

Looking ahead, the Algerian government’s Tourism Development Master Plan 2030 aims to attract 12 million international visitors. The plan includes scaling up investments in hospitality infrastructure, improving service quality, and expanding accommodation facilities.

With a mix of historical wonders, cultural depth, and striking landscapes, Algeria is poised to become one of North Africa’s most compelling destinations.

Netflix’s Ad-Supported Tier Hits 94 Million Subscribers Amid Economic Uncertainty

Netflix’s ad-supported subscription model is gaining significant traction, with the streaming giant reporting a strong surge in subscribers. As of May 2025, the company revealed that its ad-supported service now has 94 million subscribers, a significant increase from the 70 million reported in November 2024. This growth comes at a time of global economic uncertainty, with Netflix’s lower-priced plan seeing robust demand from consumers seeking affordable entertainment options.

The streaming platform’s decision to offer an ad-supported tier has proven successful, especially during economic challenges that have led many users to be more selective in their spending. In fact, Netflix reported that the ad-supported tier accounted for 55% of all new sign-ups in markets where the option is available. This surge is particularly noteworthy as Netflix works to

balance premium offerings with budget-friendly alternatives.

With over 300 million global subscribers, Netflix is also experiencing steady engagement across all of its streaming plans. The company has reassured investors that despite the shifting US trade policies, including the threat of tariffs on foreign-made films, consumer spending on streaming services remains resilient. In an attempt to further appeal to global audiences, Netflix has also expanded its language options, offering more dubbing and subtitle choices to

cater to viewers across different regions.

Netflix’s recent international successes, such as the South Korean series *Squid Game* and the Spanish hit *Money Heist*, have contributed to its global appeal. The platform continues to refine its strategy to ensure it remains a dominant player in the competitive

streaming market. These efforts, including the increased focus on its ad-supported tier, highlight Netflix’s commitment to diversifying its offerings to attract both cost-conscious subscribers and those willing to pay for a premium ad-free experience.

As it continues to expand its user base worldwide, Netflix remains optimistic about its ability to navigate the challenges posed by global trade tensions and economic shifts, ensuring its place as a leader in the streaming industry.



US Man Disappointed After Receiving Trump-Branded Watch With a Major Typo

A man from Rhode Island, USA, is making headlines after spending \$640 (approximately Rs 55,000) on a Donald Trump-branded watch, only to receive a defective timepiece with a glaring typo. Tim Petit purchased the limited edition pink “Inauguration First Lady” model from the website GetTrumpWatches as a special gift for his wife, Melanie. The watch, which was marketed as a unique piece with just 250 units available, was advertised to attract “prosperity and love while enhancing intuition and creativity.”



However, upon receiving the watch, the Petits were disappointed to discover that the Trump logo was missing the vital “T,” leaving the brand name reading “RUMP” in bold letters across the watch’s face. Tim Petit expressed his frustration, noting that he had hoped the gift would have been of the same high standard as the former President himself. He was disheartened by the lack of quality control, especially after spending such a significant amount on what was meant to be a meaningful present for his wife.

Melanie Petit shared her initial shock when she noticed the missing “T” in the logo. “How could they process this and go through something without checking their work?” she said, admitting that the mistake even caused her to tear up. Despite liking the overall style of the watch, she couldn’t overlook

the glaring error.

The website, GetTrumpWatches.com, promotes its timepieces as the “official watches of President Trump,” but in fine print, it clarifies that the brand is licensed and not associated with any political campaign or the Trump organization. After some initial difficulty in reaching the company, the Petits finally received an apology, along with an \$800 coupon as compensation for the mistake.

The Petits believe that the company needs to review its processes, particularly in its licensing department, to avoid such errors in the future. Although the incident was frustrating, the couple is hopeful that it will prompt the company to improve its quality control.

New Scam Targeting Swiggy and Zomato Users: Fake Refunds and QR Code Payments

A new scam targeting food delivery platform users has recently surfaced, alarming customers of Swiggy and Zomato. At first glance, the scam may appear as a glitch, but it has serious implications for businesses and consumers alike. It has been gaining attention on social media, with a viral video highlighting the fraudulent scheme.

In the video, a content creator shares her shocking experience with the scam. After ordering pizza from Swiggy, she received a call stating that the delivery driver had met with an accident, and the restaurant would fulfill the order directly. When she contacted the restaurant to confirm, they denied offering direct deliveries, raising suspicions. Soon after, Swiggy informed her that her order couldn’t be fulfilled and initiated a full refund, which she received promptly.

However, things took a bizarre

turn when a delivery agent later showed up at her doorstep claiming to have the food. The delivery agent then asked her to pay via a QR code, as she had already received the refund. Sensing something was wrong, the consumer immediately contacted the restaurant, only to learn they did not offer direct deliveries. The restaurant manager advised her not to pay the delivery agent and simply take the pizza.

The scam, as described by the content creator, involves the fraudster keeping the entire refund amount, exploiting the lack of platform accountability. This



issue goes beyond just free meals; it poses risks like fraudulent payouts, false delivery statistics, and customer safety concerns. It also affects small restaurants that may suffer from inventory loss and trust issues with delivery platforms.

To avoid falling victim to this scam, experts suggest the following safety measures:

- Do not trust the delivery agent if the order was cancelled and then delivered.
- Immediately contact the restaurant to verify if they offer direct deliveries.
- Contact customer care of the platform and report the incident.
- Ensure you’re paying the right person and avoid using QR codes provided by delivery agents.
- Swiggy responded to the video, assuring the public that they would investigate the matter further.

Dining With Penguins in Dubai? Viral Video Reveals Magical Experience at Ski Dubai



A unique culinary adventure has captured the hearts of netizens around the world, thanks to a now-viral Instagram reel showcasing the quirky and magical experience of dining with penguins in Dubai. Shared by user Zoe Liu (@zoroyalred), the short video gives viewers an enchanting glimpse into one of Ski Dubai’s most unusual offerings — a themed dining setup where guests enjoy a gourmet meal while penguins waddle around freely.

The video, simply captioned “What’s it like to have dinner with penguins?”, quickly went viral, sparking widespread fascination and delight. Set within the snowy interiors of Ski Dubai — located inside the Mall of the Emirates — the restaurant features icy decor, mimicking the inside of a glowing, snow-covered cave. From the frosted furniture to the cool blue lighting, the ambiance fully immerses diners in a winter wonderland.

Due to the low temperatures necessary for the comfort of the penguins, guests are provided with padded jackets, gloves, and insulated boots to stay warm throughout the experience. It’s not just a meal, but a carefully curated environ-

ment designed to make both diners and penguins feel at home.

The dining package includes a multi-course meal: beginning with a welcome drink and soup, followed by a hearty main course, dessert, and two additional beverages. However, the highlight is undoubtedly the penguins — gentle, curious, and completely at ease as they wander through the dining space. Between courses, they make their entrance, charming guests with their antics.

While the viral reel doesn’t show it, staff and trained professionals are present throughout the evening. They not only ensure the penguins’ well-being but also engage guests with educational snippets about the animals’ habits, biology, and conservation.

This once-in-a-lifetime experience blends luxury dining with an unforgettable interaction with nature, making it a must-try for both animal lovers and culinary adventurers. With the buzz growing online, “dining with penguins” at Ski Dubai has become a bucket-list experience for tourists and locals alike — proof that dinner with a few feathery friends is anything but ordinary.

Jannik Sinner Meets Tennis Fan Pope Leo XIV, Gifts Him a Tennis Racket

World No. 1 tennis player Jannik Sinner recently had a memorable meeting with the newly elected Pope Leo XIV, who is a known tennis enthusiast. The Italian tennis star was invited to the Vatican along with his parents and a delegation from the Italian Tennis Federation. During the meeting, Sinner presented the pontiff with one of his tennis rackets.

Pope Leo XIV, previously known as Cardinal Robert Prevost, is quite fond of tennis and has openly admitted to being an amateur player. In a 2023 interview, he shared that he played tennis as a child and enjoys the sport. His love for tennis was evident when



he joked earlier in the week that he didn't want to meet the world's top tennis player, not "behind the net." When asked by a journalist whether he would consider participating in a charity match, the pope lightheartedly responded, "Just don't bring Sinner," making a playful pun about the tennis star's last name.

During their meeting, Pope Leo XIV humorously declined an offer to play a few rounds of tennis, stating, "Better not," which resulted in a burst of laughter from those in attendance.

Sinner, who is currently participating in the Italian Open, is making a

comeback after a three-month doping ban. The tennis star appeared slightly embarrassed when asked about the pope's comments, burying his head in his hands during a news conference. "Why do you have to put me in a difficult spot?" Sinner responded with a laugh, adding, "It's great to know that the pope likes tennis. It's a good thing for us tennis players to have a pope who enjoys the sport."

The encounter between Sinner and the pope has caught the attention of fans worldwide, highlighting not only the connection between sport and spirituality but also the shared enthusiasm for tennis.

Lakshya Sen Exits Thailand Open, Malvika Bansod, Aakarshi Kashyap, and Unnati Advane

India's Lakshya Sen suffered a surprising loss in the first round of the Thailand Open Super 500 tournament on Wednesday, while Malvika Bansod, Aakarshi Kashyap, and Unnati Hooda made it through to the second round with hard-fought victories.

Sen, a 2021 World Championships bronze medallist, was defeated by Ireland's Nhat Nguyen in a tense three-game battle. After losing the first game 18-21, Sen fought back in the second to dominate 21-9. However, Nguyen sealed the match with a 21-17 win in the third, overcoming Sen's aggressive rallies. The match lasted for an hour and 20 minutes, marking a disappointing end for the Indian shuttler.

Meanwhile, in women's singles, Malvika Bansod (World No. 23) advanced to the second round with a 21-12, 13-21, 21-17 victory over Turkey's Neslihan Arin. She will now face seventh-seeded Ratchanok Intanon of Thailand. Aakarshi Kashyap also fought through a tough match, beating Japan's Kaoru Sugiyama 21-16, 20-22, 22-20 in a match that went down to the wire. Aakarshi will face fourth-seeded Supanida Katethong, another Thai shuttler, in the next round.

Unnati Hooda, the 17-year-old prodigy who has shown remarkable promise with wins at the 2022 Odisha Masters and 2023 Abu Dhabi Masters, won her first-round match 21-14, 18-21, 23-21 against Thailand's Thamomwan Nithiittikrai. She will next meet top seed



Pornpawee Chochuwong from Thailand.

In the men's singles, World No. 33 Priyanshu Rajawat was also knocked out, losing 13-21, 21-17, 16-21 to Alwi Farhan of Indonesia.

On a brighter note, India's top doubles pair, Tressa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand (World No. 10), had a strong start, winning 21-15, 21-13 against Malaysia's Ong XY and C Ting. They will next face Japan's Rui Hirokami and Sayaka Hobara.

Other Indian players, including Rakshitha Sree Santhosh Ramraj and Anupama Upadhyaya, lost their opening singles matches.

2025 World Test Championship Final to Feature Record Prize Money



The winners of the 2025 World Test Championship (WTC) will be awarded a record prize of \$3.6 million, more than double the \$1.6 million that was handed to Australia for winning the final against India in 2023. The significant increase in prize money underscores the International Cricket Council's (ICC) commitment to elevating the profile of Test cricket, reflecting its efforts to grow the competition.

The 2025 final will see Australia take on South Africa at the historic Lord's Cricket Ground, with the match set to begin on June 11. In addition to the champions' share of \$3.6 million, the losing finalists will receive \$2.1 million. This marks a sharp rise from the \$800,000 received by the runners-up in the

previous two editions of the WTC.

The prize money boost highlights the ICC's ongoing focus on Test cricket, aiming to build on the momentum created by the first three cycles of the nine-team competition. South Africa made a strong finish in the current cycle, clinching 69.44 percentage points with a 2-0 home series win over Sri Lanka and Pakistan. Defending champions Australia followed closely behind with 67.54 points, while India, despite leading the standings for much of the competition, finished with 50.00 points.

Australian captain Pat Cummins expressed pride in his team's achievement, stating, "We are enormously proud to have the opportunity to

defend the World Test Championship, especially at Lord's. It's a testament to all those involved across the past two years who have worked incredibly hard to reach the final."

South African skipper Temba Bavuma also acknowledged the significance of the event, saying, "Everyone understands the importance of Test cricket, and the World Test Championship lends context to this vital format of the game. Lord's is a fitting venue for this mega fixture, and all of us will be out there trying to give our best against Australia."

The 2025 final is shaping up to be a thrilling contest between two of the best teams in Test cricket.

Carlos Alcaraz and Coco Gauff Reach Italian Open Semifinals with Straight-Set Wins

Carlos Alcaraz and Coco Gauff both advanced to the semifinals of the Italian Open on Wednesday, each securing impressive straight-set victories in their respective quarterfinal matches.

Alcaraz, who had a challenging start to the season due to injuries, faced a tough test from Jack Draper but ultimately triumphed 6-4, 6-4. Despite Draper's strong challenge, Alcaraz managed to save six of the eight break points he faced. The Spaniard, who had previously lost to Draper in the semifinals at Indian Wells, showed his resilience by coming from 2-4 down in the first set. In the second set, he fought through a crucial eighth game, saving two break points, before breaking Draper at love and sealing the match. Alcaraz's next opponent will either be defending champion Alexander Zverev or Italy's Lorenzo Musetti.

After the match, Alcaraz reflected on his performance, stating, "The most important thing I did today was not thinking about the shots at all. I just tried to be aggressive, play good shots, drop shots, and go to the net. That's what I like to do, and I think that made the difference today."



On the women's side, Coco Gauff continued her dominant form, advancing to the semifinals for the third time in Rome with a 6-4, 7-6(5) win over Russia's Mirra Andreeva. Gauff showed aggressive play throughout the match, and while Andreeva fought hard in the tiebreaker, Gauff closed out the match with a solid finish. This win marks Gauff's fourth victory over Andreeva, having beaten her at the French Open, U.S. Open, and in Madrid earlier this year. Gauff's next opponent will be the winner between Aryna Sabalenka and Zheng Qinwen.

As the Italian Open serves as a key preparation event for the upcoming French Open, both Alcaraz and Gauff are in strong form heading into the final stages of the tournament.

India Announces Women's Squads for White-Ball Tour to England Starting June 28

India has announced its women's cricket squads for the upcoming white-ball tour of England, which will include five T20 Internationals (T20Is) and three One Day Internationals (ODIs). Harmanpreet Kaur will continue to lead both squads, with Smriti Mandhana named as vice-captain.



The series is set to begin on June 28 with the first T20I in Nottingham. The final T20I will take place in Birmingham on July 12. The ODI leg of the tour will kick off on July 16 in Southampton, with the final match scheduled for July 22 at Chester-le-Street.

Notably absent from both squads are Renuka Singh and Shreyanka Patil, who have been key players in past series but will sit out this tour. The selection panel has instead placed faith in several young talents, including Sree Charani, Shuchi Upadhyay, and Kranti Gaud, who will feature in both formats.

In their last international assignment, Team India clinched the ODI tri-series against Sri Lanka and South Africa. In the final played in

Here are the full squads for the England tour:

T20I Squad:
Harmanpreet Kaur (Captain), Smriti Mandhana (Vice-Captain), Shafali Verma, Jemimah Rodrigues, Richa Ghosh (Wicketkeeper), Yastika Bhatia (Wicketkeeper), Harleen Deol, Deepti Sharma, Sneha Rana, Sree Charani, Shuchi Upadhyay, Amanjot Kaur, Arundhati Reddy, Kranti Gaud, Sayali Satghare.

ODI Squad:
Harmanpreet Kaur (Captain), Smriti Mandhana (Vice-Captain), Pratika Rawal, Harleen Deol, Jemimah Rodrigues, Richa Ghosh (Wicketkeeper), Yastika Bhatia (Wicketkeeper), Tejal Hasabnis, Deepti Sharma, Sneha Rana, Sree Charani, Shuchi Upadhyay, Amanjot Kaur, Arundhati Reddy, Kranti Gaud, Sayali Satghare.

The tour promises to be a key preparation ground for India's women ahead of future ICC events and offers several younger players a platform to prove their mettle on foreign soil.



Sreeleela & Kireeti Set for Debut in Junior, Hitting Screens on July 18

Business tycoon and former Karnataka minister Gali Janardhan Reddy's son, Kireeti Reddy, is all set to make his acting debut with the upcoming film *Junior*. The film, touted as a youthful love and family entertainer, stars popular actress Sreeleela in the lead opposite Kireeti. It is directed by Radha Krishna and produced by Rajani Korrapati under the prestigious banner Vaaraahi Chalana Chitram.

The makers have officially locked July 18, 2025, as the release date for *Junior*. Promising a Pan-India appeal, the film will release in all major South Indian languages—Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, and Malayalam—along with Hindi, aiming to capture audiences across regional markets.

The announcement came with a vibrant and appealing poster that showcases the main cast. The visual hints at the film's wholesome nature, blending romance, emotions, and family drama, while also spotlighting the youthful energy of the leads. The poster also features Genelia Deshmukh and Kannada superstar Dr Ravichandran V, who play key roles in the narrative, further boosting the film's star power and cross-industry appeal.

The musical score for *Junior* is composed by acclaimed music director Devi Sri Prasad, ensuring a high-energy and melodious soundtrack. The cinematography is being handled by the celebrated KK Senthil Kumar, known for his stellar visual work in numerous blockbusters. With such a talented team onboard, *Junior* is expected to be a visual and musical treat.



As Kireeti makes his transition from a political legacy to a cinematic debut, all eyes are on how he performs in this big-budget launch vehicle. Backed by strong production values, a popular star cast, and a seasoned technical crew, *Junior* is positioned as a high-stakes launchpad for the debutant.

The team behind *Junior* has promised regular updates leading up to its release. With the combination of fresh faces, established stars, and an experienced crew, the film has generated considerable buzz ahead of its theatrical release on July 18.

Jr NTR to Possibly Portray Dadasaheb Phalke in Grand Biopic Backed by Rajamouli?

Jr NTR, known for his intense performances and larger-than-life screen presence, may soon step into a completely new cinematic territory. According to recent reports from Mumbai media circles, the actor is being considered to play the iconic role of Dadasaheb Phalke—the father of Indian cinema—in a powerful and emotionally rich biopic.



Currently busy with major projects such as *War 2*, *Prashanth Neel's* untitled film, and *Devara 2*, Jr NTR has reportedly shown keen interest in this historical film. Sources close to the development suggest that the project is being spearheaded by SS Rajamouli, his son SS Karthikeya, and Varun Gupta of Max Studios. The script, said to be ready, left Jr NTR deeply moved and he is believed to have given an instant nod.

If finalized, this film will mark a striking shift in Jr NTR's filmography, moving away from his usual mass-action roles to take on a nuanced, biographical character. Playing Dadasaheb Phalke—a visionary who laid the foundation for Indian cinema—would demand depth, restraint, and emotional intensity. Many industry watchers view this as a bold move for a commercial star like Jr NTR, but also one that could redefine his career trajectory.

Dadasaheb Phalke, born Dhundiraj Govind Phal-

ke in 1870, directed India's first full-length feature film *Raja Harishchandra* in 1913, an effort that marked the birth of Indian cinema. He went on to direct 95 films in total, often under difficult personal and financial circumstances. Inspired by *The Life of Christ* in 1910, Phalke dedicated his life to filmmaking, even selling his belongings and traveling to London to purchase equipment. His wife, Saraswati Bai, was instrumental in supporting his dream, even selling her jewelry to fund their first film.

Despite his immense contributions, Phalke's later years were marked by hardship and poverty. He lived without a permanent home for several years and passed away in obscurity.

If Jr NTR does take on this role, the biopic could become one of the most heartfelt and meaningful performances of his career, offering audiences an unforgettable tribute to the pioneer of Indian cinema.

Samantha to Make Her Relationship with Raj Nidimoru Official Soon? Say's Reports

Samantha Ruth Prabhu, one of South India's most talked-about stars, is once again in the spotlight — but this time for personal reasons. The actress, known for her candor and grace, is reportedly preparing to officially announce her relationship with filmmaker Raj Nidimoru of the *Raj & DK* duo.

The buzz began when Samantha shared a cozy photo with Raj on her Instagram, immediately sparking speculation. Raj has increasingly been seen on Samantha's social media and has been spotted visiting her residence in Hyderabad, leading fans to wonder if something more than friendship is brewing. The two have also been seen together in public on multiple occasions, further fueling dating rumors.



Now, according to a report by Great Andhra, sources close to the couple have revealed that Samantha and Raj are ready to go public with their relationship. No longer wanting to keep things under wraps, the couple is reportedly planning to make an official announcement soon, much to the excitement of fans who have been closely follow-

ing their journey. Adding to the speculation, another source has suggested that the two are already scouting for a new home together. If true, this move could mark the beginning of a significant new chapter in both their lives.

Samantha was previously married to actor Naga Chaitanya.

The two tied the knot in 2017 and announced their separation in 2021. Since then, Chaitanya has moved on and recently married actress Sobhita Dhulipala.

Raj Nidimoru, on the other hand, was married to Shhyamali De. The couple wed in 2015 and reportedly separated in 2022. Shhyamali has a strong film background herself, having worked with filmmakers like Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra and Vishal Bhardwaj. While neither Samantha nor Raj has officially confirmed their relationship, all signs point toward an imminent announcement. Fans are now eagerly awaiting confirmation, as the actress seems ready to embrace love again and open a new, more joyful chapter in her life.

Ram Pothineni's RAPO 22 Titled Andhra King Taluka, Promises a Fan-Fueled Cinematic Ride

Energetic star Ram Pothineni is all set to captivate audiences with his 22nd film, officially titled *Andhra King Taluka*. Directed by Mahesh Babu P, who previously impressed with *Miss Shetty Mr. Polishetty*, the film was announced with an exciting title glimpse released on the occasion of Ram's birthday. The glimpse has quickly created a buzz, offering a compelling look into a story centered around the intense world of fan culture.



Andhra King Taluka presents a powerful narrative driven by the unwavering devotion of a die-hard fan. The title reveal video sets the tone for an emotionally charged story, capturing the electric atmosphere surrounding a superstar's film release. It vividly portrays the chaos and pressure faced by cinema exhibitors as they scramble to meet the sky-high demand for tickets—a reality well-known in the South Indian film industry.

The theme of fan frenzy, deeply ingrained in Indian cinema, forms the emotional core of the film. This unique storyline promises to resonate not only with Ram's fans but with moviegoers across the country who understand the powerful bond between a star and their admirers.

In a special addition to the cast, Kannada superstar Upendra steps into the role of

the iconic movie star whom Ram's character idolizes, adding weight and nostalgia to the film. Bhagyashree Borse joins as the female lead, and her pairing with Ram is already drawing attention.

Backed by the renowned production house Mythri Movie Makers, *Andhra King Taluka* also boasts a musical score by the talented composer duo Vivek Marvin, who are expected to elevate the film's emotional and dramatic arcs with their music.

With its rich premise, talented cast, and a director known for his flair in blending humor and heart, *Andhra King Taluka* is shaping up to be a major theatrical experience. While the official release date is yet to be announced, expectations are already high for what could be one of Ram Pothineni's most memorable performances.

Don 3: Ranveer Singh and Vikrant Massey Set to Begin Filming This September

The highly anticipated third installment of *Don* is finally gearing up for production. After months of speculation and delays, *Don 3*, directed by Farhan Akhtar, is all set to go on floors in September 2025. The film stars Ranveer Singh in the lead role, stepping into the iconic shoes once worn by Shah Rukh Khan and Amitabh Bachchan in earlier versions. Vikrant Massey has been cast as the antagonist, setting the stage for an exciting face-off.

The transition from Shah Rukh Khan to Ranveer Singh created a stir among fans, but director Farhan Akhtar has emphasized that the change was essential and that Ranveer is the right choice to carry the franchise forward. While the initial shooting schedule faced setbacks due to Farhan's commitment to *120 Bahadur* and Ranveer's ongoing work in *Dhurandar*, both projects are now nearing completion, clearing the path for *Don 3*.



According to a report from News18 Showsha, both Ranveer and Vikrant will be a part of the first shooting schedule, which promises to kick off with high-octane, stylized action sequences. These include intense bike chases and combat scenes that will highlight the stark contrast between Ranveer's flamboyant *Don* and Vikrant's grounded, gritty antagonist. The duo previously shared screen space in *Dil Dhadakne Do* and *Lootera*, but *Don 3*

marks their first major on-screen rivalry.

The female lead of the film remains a mystery. Kiara Advani, who was originally cast, has opted out due to her pregnancy. Currently, the makers are reportedly considering Kriti Sanon and Sharvari Wagh, with a final decision expected soon.

Backed by Excel Entertainment, *Don 3* is set to be a slick, action-packed thriller that reinvents the legacy of the *Don* franchise for a new generation. With a fresh cast, powerful visuals, and a compelling narrative, this reboot is aiming to be more than just a continuation — it's a reimagination. Fans can expect further announcements and a teaser rollout in the coming months, as production ramps up toward the much-anticipated cinematic showdown between Ranveer Singh and Vikrant Massey.